At prayer meeting a tearful church member requested prayer for a certain female, noting a cadre of problems this lady faced. When they got home the pastor’s wife informed him that the lady with all the problems that they had prayed for was a soap opera heroine. When Paul says to pray for “*all the saints*,” this is not what he had in mind.

We have been looking at the armor that the Lord provides for us, so that we can stand for Him in evil days like these in which we live. “Behind all this armor, there is a state, a disposition, a means of strength, which quickens and gives all the rest its power: this is a complete dependence on God, united to trust in Him, which expresses itself in prayer. "*Praying always*"; this dependence must be constant ... It seeks the strength which it has not: it seeks it from Him in whom it trusts. It is the motion of the Spirit in our hearts in [our] communion with God, so that our battles are fought in the communion of His strength and His favor, and in the consciousness that we can do nothing, and that He is all ... This prayer is the expression of the man's need, of the heart's desire, in the strength that the Spirit gives him, as well as in confidence in God. Also since it is the Spirit's act, it embraces all saints, not one of whom can be forgotten by Jesus; and the Spirit in us answers the affections of Christ, and reproduces them. We must be watchful and diligent in order to use this weapon; avoiding all that would turn us away from God ...” ( *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible* )

Paul, the great Apostle, one of the greatest Christians who ever lived, now asks for prayer. If he felt that ***he*** needed prayer, how much more do ***we***? Let’s look at Paul’s prayer requests. We will break these verses down under two headings suggested by John Butler - Person and Particulars. Here we go!

**I. PERSON (19)**

*And for me …*

The great Apostle knew he needed prayers from brothers and sisters to bolster his ministry.

A. Burden

*My eager expectation and hope is that I will not be ashamed about anything, but that now as always, with all courage, Christ will be highly honored in my body, whether by life or by death. Living Is Christ 21 For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain*. Phil 1:20-21

His burden is to “*make known … the mystery of the gospel*”

B. Bonds

*For this I am an ambassador in chains* (20)

2 Cor 5.20— *we are ambassadors for Christ*

Paul was incarcerated. In his day, jail wasn’t “three hots and a cot,” and there was wasn’t cable TV, either. Roman jails were notoriously harsh places. Paul said, “*Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead and descended from David, according to my gospel, 9 for which I suffer to the point of being bound like a criminal. But the word of God is not bound*” (2 Tim 2:8-9).

Some estimate that Paul in prison about 5.5 years, mostly waiting for trials. He didn’t put his ministry on hold. He went right on preaching. He now had a “captive audience!” Paul wrote, “*Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually advanced the gospel, 13 so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard, and to everyone else, that my imprisonment is because I am in Christ. 14 Most of the brothers have gained confidence in the Lord from my imprisonment and dare even more to speak the word fearlessly. 15 To be sure, some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of good will. 16 These preach out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel; 17 the others proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, thinking that they will cause me trouble in my imprisonment. 18 What does it matter? Only that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is proclaimed, and in this I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice 19 because I know this will lead to my salvation through your prayers and help from the Spirit of Jesus Christ*” (Phil 1:12-19).

We let things stop us. We need to be like Paul and see every obstacle as an opportunity! Nothing should hold up the glorious gospel!

**II. PARTICULARS (19-20)**

A. Communication (19

Message = ***logos*** = word

1. The truth

*That the message may be given* (The LORD gives the message)

2. The telling

*When I open my mouth***—** Truth must be told

We can’t be tight lipped with the good news!

B. Courage

*with boldness (19) -*

*that I might be bold enough to speak*  (20)

Boldness comes from “*being with Jesus*.” The Bible says, “*When they observed the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed and recognized that* ***they had been with Jesus****”* (Acts 4:13).

See Acts 4.23-32 - ***grant that your servants may speak your word with all boldness -***  They didn’t pray for safety. They didn’t call down fire on the religious leaders. They prayed for boldness to share the gospel!

C. Character

*as I ought*

1. Opportunity

2. Obligation

*I am obligated both to Greeks and barbarians, both to the wise and the foolish. 15 So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome. 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek*. (Rom 1:14-16)

D. Content

*The mystery of the gospel*

The content of our message is special. It is particular. One cannot communicate just anything and be true to the gospel and the word of God.

1. Mystery - “an open secret,” once hidden but shown by God

2. Message

The message is the good news, the gospel of Jesus Christ

3. Marvel

It is Amazing Grace! It is mighty power! It is endless mercy! It is boundless love! It saves “a wretch like ***ME***!”

*Therefore, he is* ***able to save to the uttermost*** *those who come to God through him, since he always lives to intercede for them*. Hebrews 7:25. He saves the gutter-most to the uttermost!

“Paul, the prisoner in chains, humbly requests prayer from others because he wants to communicate the good news boldly and effectively. The greatest theologian-missionary of all times is asking for prayer! That should encourage you! He has the position (as do we) of being an “ambassador,” a representative of Jesus; but, he knows he does not have sufficient resources to communicate the gospel effectively, so he calls on the church to pray for him. Instead of feeling self-pity or resentment, he asks for prayer for the mission!

Pray for others as they share the gospel. Why? Satan does not want us to have the right words to say or to be bold in the face of conflict. Evangelism is spiritual warfare. The culture opposes it. So we need God’s power to do it faithfully. Paul experienced the Lord’s presence in his own imprisonment” (*Exalting Christ in Ephesians*).

Arthur T. Pierson sat with George Mueller one day, and Mr. Mueller was telling him of some of the wonderful things that God had done for the orphanage at Bristol. As he talked he was writing, and Dr. Pierson noticed that he was having difficulty with his pen-point. Right in the midst of the conversation Mr. Mueller seemed to lose sight of his visitor, he bowed his head for a moment or two in prayer, and then began writing again. Mr. Pierson said, “Mr. Mueller, what were you praying about just now?” “Oh,” Mr. Mueller said, “perhaps you didn’t notice that I was having trouble with this pen-point. I haven’t another, and this is an important letter, so I was asking the Lord to help me so that I could write it clearly.” “Dear me,” said Dr. Pierson, “a man who trusts God for millions of pounds also prays about a scratchy pen-point.” Yes, you may go to Him about everything (H A Ironside).

Paul asks for prayer. The Apostle needed prayer. We may think ‘big-time’ preachers do not need prayer. Why would we think that. Men like Robert Jefress of First Dallas, Jack Graham of Prestonwood and Josh Howerton of LakePointe, all need prayers. All of our brothers and sisters and all of our pastors and ministers need and deserve our prayers. And I do too.

This little spot up here behind this pulpit is where I will take my stand. This is some of the most important territory on the face of the planet. We put the armor on so that we can stand. Paul encourages us to stand praying, all kinds of prayers for all the saints. He adds, “and for me.” This is the spot where I will take my stand. I have other places where I am doing things, but this is my spot that the Lord has given me, I am going to stand right here. I need ya’ll to pray for me.

Pray, says Paul, “***’even for me’*** *that I may boldly share the gospel*.” We, too, are ambassadors for Christ. We too face obstacles, opposition and oppression. We too are obligated to get out the gospel. Therefore, we seek prayer and we send up prayers . Paul says, “*all kinds of prayers all the time, for all the saints* ***and for me***!!”