



Truth Matters

A Publication Discussing Matters Related To Truth Because Truth Matters

Scripture Reading
Week of
July 31st - August 6th



Monday

- ❖ Nehemiah 3, 4
- ❖ Psalm 130
- ❖ 2 Corinthians 2

Tuesday

- ❖ Nehemiah 5, 6
- ❖ Psalm 131
- ❖ 2 Corinthians 3

Wednesday

- ❖ Nehemiah 7, 8
- ❖ Psalm 132
- ❖ 2 Corinthians 4

Thursday

- ❖ Nehemiah 9, 10
- ❖ Psalm 133
- ❖ 2 Corinthians 5

Friday

- ❖ Nehemiah 11, 12
- ❖ Psalm 134
- ❖ 2 Corinthians 6

Saturday

- ❖ Nehemiah 13

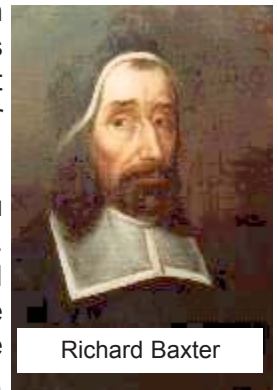
Sunday

- ❖ Esther 1, 2

How to Pray Series *Praying for Your Pastor*

Of all the articles I could write about prayer, this one seems to be the most self-serving. Yes, I covet the daily prayers of every one of the people who attend our church. Even as I sit to write this article, my heart is heavy. I have just spent 18 hours in a van with my wife and four children. I have seen 18 hours worth of my own impatience and wickedness. I need prayer. Upon returning home, I received three e-mails informing me of men in the ministry who have been released from their duties and even arrested on federal charges because of moral failures. This is a haunting reality. I know that such potential for evil exists in my flesh. Therefore, I covet your prayers.

I am borrowing two different lists for your constant use as you pray for me and other pastors that may come along in the future. The first list is written by a contemporary of mine, John Piper. I know he is a man of prayer and a man who teaches his people to pray. This letter demonstrates that desire. The second is one of my ancient heroes, a Puritan pastor named Richard Baxter. He wrote a book entitled *The Reformed Pastor*. I read this book annually. It is one of my favorite Puritan books. When Baxter used the word "reformed" he meant transformed. He wrote with the hopes that God would transform pastors. That is my prayer. Upon reading that book, I have compiled a list of desires that I want to happen in me through our prayers.



Richard Baxter

Prayer for Pastors¹

The Apostle Paul gave a straightforward plea to the church at Thessalonica: "Brothers, pray for us" (2 Thessalonians 3:1). I love its simplicity. It is emotionally understated. We hear the same plea with more vehemence in Romans 15:30: "Strive together with me in your prayers to God for me." Here is a great man of God. He has great gifts with great experiences with God. He is a brilliant intellect. He is a valiant warrior. He is a chosen instrument of God for receiving revelation. And he pleads for prayer! How much more should I beg you to strive with me in your prayers to God for me?

I want you to strive in your prayers for me for two reasons:

1. Because what counts in the Christian ministry cannot be accomplished by man left to himself.
 - For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed (Romans 15:18).

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¹ John Piper, "Prayer for Pastors" in *A Godward Life*, vol. 2 (Wheaton: Crossway, 2002)

How to Pray Series

Praying for Your Pastor

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- But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me (1 Corinthians 15:10).
 - Whoever speaks, *is to do so* as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves *is to do so* as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4.11).
 - Now [may] the God of peace . . . equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen. (Hebrews 13.20-21).
2. Because God has set up the world so that moral transformation and ministry triumph come by prayer.
- a. Moral transformation:
- And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment (Philippians 1.9).
 - We have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God (Colossians 1.9-10).
 - Pray that you may not enter into temptation (Luke 22:40).
- b. Ministry triumph:
- Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, that I may be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints (Romans 15:30-31).
 - Pray for us that the word of the Lord will spread rapidly and be glorified, just as *it did* also with you (2 Thessalonians 3:1).
 - Pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel (Ephesians 6:19).
 - Pray . . . for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak (Colossians 4:3-4).

As you pray for me, please let these texts be your guide.

The Reformed Pastor²

1. See that the work of saving grace be thoroughly wrought in your own souls. Take heed to yourselves, lest you be void of the saving grace of God which you offer to others.
2. Content not yourselves with being in a state of grace, but be also careful that your graces are kept in vigorous and lively exercise, and that you preach to yourselves the sermons which you study, before you preach them to others.
3. Take heed to yourselves, lest your example contradict your doctrine, and lest you lay such stumbling-blocks before the blind, as may be the occasion of their ruin; lest you unsay with your lives, what you say with your tongue; and be the greatest hinderers of the success of your own labors.

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²Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*. (Edinburgh, England: Banner of Truth, 1999).

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Praying for Your Pastor

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4. Take heed to yourselves lest you live in those sins which you preach against in others, and lest you be guilty of that which daily you condemn.

5. Take heed to yourselves that you want not the qualifications necessary for your work.

6. Take heed to yourselves, for you have a depraved nature and sinful inclinations as well as others.

7. Take heed to yourselves, because the tempter will more ply you with his temptations than other men.

8. Take heed to yourselves, because there are many eyes upon you, and there will be many to observe your fall.

9. Take heed to yourselves, because your sins have more heinous aggravation than other men's.

10. Take heed to yourselves, because such great works as ours require greater grace than other men's.

11. Take heed to yourselves, for the honor of your Lord and Master, and of his holy truth and ways, doth lie more on you than on other men.

12. Take heed to yourselves, because the success of your labors depends on it.

Corporate Arsenal Passages

God is Faithful to All His Promises

Promise 19: Promise to keep you from falling

Psalm 37:23-24

The steps of a man are established by the Lord, when he delights in his way; ²⁴ though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong, for the Lord upholds his hand.



Psalm 55:22

Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.