

Remembering

Praying for others

Foundation

Bible passage: 2 Tim 1.3-4 etc

In the Bible there are thirteens letter written by the Apostle Paul himself or with others. In all these letters, except one, we hear about how Paul prayed for the person or people to whom he was writing. Several times he speaks about remembering people in prayer. For example, Paul writes to his young colleague Timothy: “I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I **remember** you constantly in my prayers night and day. As I **remember** your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy”(2 Tim 1.3-4). Similarly, he wrote to the Church in Thessalonica “We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, **remembering** before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess 1.2-3).

“I remember you constantly in my prayers, night and day”

When Christians pray, they are often doing what Paul is describing - remembering other people. This doesn't mean sitting and calling to mind happy memories of them, but rather calling them to mind, thanking God for them, and then pleading to God to build them up in faith, help them in need and so on.

Paul remembered how well young Timothy had worked with him in serving God and telling people about Jesus. As Paul got older Timothy was having to take more responsibility and that clearly wasn't always easy for him. He also seems

to have suffered with a bad stomach. When writing to Timothy Paul encouraged him to stand firm in his faith, to spend his time teaching and preaching, and to deal with practical issues in the churches. (He also showed practical concern for his Timothy's health telling him to drink a little wine for his stomach.) We can be sure that Paul not only wrote about these things but also prayed about them as he remembered Timothy.

So too in his prayers Paul seems to have prayed regularly for the many churches he had helped to establish and for the people in them. When he prayed for the Christians in Thessaolonica he particularly remembered their faith, love, work, hope and steadfastness. They were an encouragement to Paul. Not doubt he did ask for things in prayer for them, but he mostly talks about giving thanks.

It is important in prayer to give thanks as well as to ask for things for others. When Paul talks about remembering, he is calling to mind others in his prayers, both so that he can give thanks to God for their faith and so on, but also so that he can pray for their needs. This is a good example to follow when praying.



Part of prayer is about remembering others, thanking God for them and asking God to help them.

