

**Malmö Mission Covenant Church
Scattered But Worshiping Together
June 14, 2020**

***At 11 am gather in a common area in your home.
In the centre, place a lit candle.***

Prayer (Or you can pray in your own words)

Great and merciful God, who knows the sparrow and the lily by name, tell us today the story of your knowledge of us.
Assure us that the hours we spend in this world are lived in your sight and in your care, to free us from anxiety and striving and to rest in your benevolence; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

**Scripture Reading for the Day - Ephesians
1:15-23**

Take time to pray together.

- Malmö Pastors & staff
- For Malmö's everyday and building financial needs
- For our Church Leaders meeting on Tuesday to discern our restart.
- Jan - healing from surgery & health for the days to come
- For our Seniors & shut-ins
- Mary Ann's sister-in-law, Amy - continued healing after quad accident
- Vivian - still in hospital. Pray for her healing & for Bert & the family as well.
- Dave & Carol
- For those at greater health risk during Covid-19
- Keith & Monika - pregnant. Pray for health & safety of the baby
- Covenant Bay Bible Camp
- Covid-19 - here and around the world
- Any other needs you may have...

Message - This week the Message is also on video on the church worship website. Go to scatteredbutgathered.com and click on the service for today to find it.

We were talking this week about our insecurities at staff meeting. Our personal and work insecurities. I feel insecure trying to pastor people while not being allowed to be present with them. I feel a failure

many times. But there are things I can do, even from a distance.

As an apostle, Paul was a type of Pastor. He felt in his heart affection for the people of God he was called to serve and teach and lead, even from a distance.

This affection, this love is something you should expect your pastor to have for you.

Ephesians 1:15

“ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God’s people, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.”

Paul prays for the Ephesian church out of a love for them.

This love is a funny thing, between a pastor and church, because each can be fickle and occasionally we each fail at relationship.

There are stresses in life that make each of us cranky or broken, and even hard to love sometimes.

But as Paul says, this seed of love for them started the day he heard of their faith in Christ and their love for God's people.

It's interesting that these two values are so very central to who we are and what we do as followers of Christ. This is a good starting point for a relationship.

Faith in Christ and a love for God's people are really the great commandment. When the church is doing this, that really gives the pastor reason to give thanks!

There are always going to be personality challenges and perceptions. But when there is a decision to love one another, and to honour them in spite of past struggles, God is glorified, and the pastors work is a blessing.

With faith and love that is real, a pastor will easily be praying for his flock. And so I pray for you.

What do I pray?

Paul continues...

“I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.”

The Spirit of Wisdom and revelation.

Two very key parts of your life and your faith story.

The wisdom, Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 1, is a heavenly wisdom, not earthly smarts, not common sense.

He writes: “No, we declare God’s wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.”

Its a wisdom that helps us to know God and to have his mind about things. Wisdom to know what to say and how to act. Wisdom to know how to live and trust and have faith.

Heavenly wisdom is available to each of us by the Spirit. He helps in difficult moments.

A pastor prays for wisdom for his people.

He also prays for Revelation, -when something is revealed to us.

Revelation is like a little seed that gets shot into the garden of your heart where it sprouts something living and it grows into an amazing beautiful understanding.

Revelation is the AH HA moment, when we understand something about God or faith or ourselves. Its the moment when we GET IT!

Just being told things about God won’t change us at all. But when Revelation happens, when we hear an idea or hear a sermon or read a book, and we have that AH HA moment, that’s what settles into our heart and begins a process of changing us.

Paul writes:

“I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you,”

Our hearts have eyes to see. When we see with our heart or we have the REVELATION or the I GET IT moment, that’s when we start to be changed.

Reading books or listening to sermons or hearing information doesn’t change us, but the revelation, the seed, the encounter with The Truth, will change us.

Paul and pastors everywhere, including myself are praying for their people to have that heavenly wisdom and that AH HA revelation more, so that they may know Christ better. For then we are conformed into the image of Christ more and more.

But Paul prays for even more. Ephesians 1:18

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

HOPE, he prays for them to know hope.

I pray that you may know the hope you have, especially on hopeless days.

On days and at times when all hope seems to have fled, when life seems utterly hopeless, when there are no clear answers, your pastor is praying for you.

It helps to know what you are going through so that I can pray well, but often God will bring you to my mind, and I pray.

While driving to or from town, or in the night while I’m trying to sleep. While vacuuming or while studying, God brings your name to mind and I pray.

Hope is that thing that makes us sure that an answer is coming, that help is around the corner, that there will be a new day tomorrow, that my struggles will ease.

Proverbs says that when hope fails it makes the heart sick. Sick people need lots of prayer, even the heart sick people. So we pray.

Paul prayed for hope for them but also that they might know Gods incomparably great **power** for us who believe...

V. 19-21

That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead

and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

I pray that you may know the power that is available to you, especially on days when you feel utterly powerless. I pray that all the power of heaven and the resurrection power used to bring Christ back from the dead, is applied to your situation.

So that the power of heaven is made available to you and your needs.

The power that formed creation, power that made life from nothing, power that conquers death, power that lives and breathes. Power.

But the power he provides may look different than we thought it should look like.

Perhaps he provides us with power to carry on moving through the valley of the shadow, rather than to remove us from the valley altogether.

Perhaps it is enough power to provide finances for us for the present day, and not to provide for us for the whole year in one lump sum.

Perhaps it's just enough power to put up with our difficult coworker one more day, rather than to remove the coworker from your life.

Sometimes we miss His power at work in our situations because we are looking for it in a certain way, but that way may not be best for us, or for our situation, or for the world.

Don't miss his power which is at work in you, because you are looking for something else.

You see the pastor prays but he really isn't THE BOSS. He's not the head of the church and he's not really in charge.

But he prays to the One who is the head of the church, for the church.

See, Verse 22 and 23,
“And God placed all things under his (Christ's) feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the

fullness of him who fills everything in every way.”

There it is, loud and clear. God, Christ's father, has exalted Christ and placed all things under him, and appointed him to be the head over everything for the church.

You see, He's in charge. I am just a servant of his here. When I forget that, I get in trouble.

If we recognize Jesus as the head of the church, that means that we can let him lead us and if we submit to him, he will lead us.

God has placed us and our little church in a field here, under Christ's hand of control.

The pastor can't cause revelation or wisdom to come to people, he can't make power come to change your story or cause you to have hope.

That stuff is the work of Christ here at Malmo and a thousand other local churches.

But the pastor can pray for you. They can ask God for hope and strength, for wisdom and revelation, for help and direction.

And they do, at least this one does.

Closing Prayer

Pray together the Lords Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.