

## **The Commendable Christian**

Ephesians 1:15-16

12/31/17

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**The commendable Christian grows to be more and more like Jesus.**

### **I. The commendable Christian has saving faith (love for God). (v. 15a)**

Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.” (John 6:28-29)

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. (Hebrews 11:6)

So also Abraham “believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” (Galatians 3:6)

Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment...” (Matthew 22:34-38)

We love because he first loved us. (1 John 4:19)

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ... (Romans 5:1)

But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. (Philippians 3:7-9)

And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. (1 John 3:23)

In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. (James 2:17)

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love. (Galatians 5:6)

### **II. The commendable Christian has love for others (agape). (v. 15b)**

“...And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” (Matthew 22:39-40)

We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all God’s people— the faith and love that spring from the hope stored up for you in heaven and about which you have already heard in the true message of the gospel... (Colossians 1:3-5)

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends! (Philippians 4:1)

Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well. (1 Thessalonians 2:7b-8)

Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart. For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. (1 Peter 1:22-23)

And now, dear lady, I am not writing you a new command but one we have had from the beginning. I ask that we love one another.<sup>6</sup> And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love. (2 John 5-6)

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:34-35)

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. (Galatians 6:10)

We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death. Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him. This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth. (1 John 3:14-18)

### III. **The commendable Christian has a thankful heart.** (v. 16a)

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world. (Romans 1:8)

But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. (Romans 6:17)

I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. (1 Corinthians 1:4)

We ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love all of you have for one another is increasing. (2 Thessalonians 1:3)

All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God. (2 Corinthians 4:15)

I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy... (Philippians 1:3-4)

We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. (1 Thessalonians 1:2)

#### IV. **The commendable Christian prays for others.** (v. 16b)

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. (Colossians 4:2)

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. (Romans 12:12)

Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well. (3 John 1:2)

##### **a. Submission to God's authority**

Indeed, Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. (Acts 4:28-29)

During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. (Hebrews 5:7)

"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." (Luke 22:42)

"This, then, is how you should pray:

"Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be Your name,  
Your kingdom come,  
Your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven. (Matthew 6:9-10)

##### **b. Successful ministry**

“But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.” (Luke 22:32)

Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”

After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. (Acts 4:29-31)

So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. (Acts 13:3)

Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. (Acts 14:23)

And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. (Colossians 4:3-4)

Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should. (Ephesians 6:19-20)

### **c. Salvations**

Brothers and sisters, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. (Romans 10:1)

As for other matters, brothers and sisters, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you. (2 Thessalonians 3:1)

### **d. Safety**

Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many. (2 Corinthians 1:9-11)

I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. Pray that I may be kept safe from the unbelievers in Judea and that the contribution I take to Jerusalem may be favorably received by the Lord’s people there... (Romans 15:30-31)

And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil people, for not everyone has faith. (2 Thessalonians 3:2)

My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. (John 17:15)

On reaching the place, he said to them, “Pray that you will not fall into temptation.” (Luke 22:40)

#### **e. Spiritual growth**

And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight... (Philippians 1:9)

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives... (Colossians 1:9)

Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. (Colossians 4:12)

With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may bring to fruition your every desire for goodness and your every deed prompted by faith. We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12)