



PRAYING BIBLICALLY

FOR YOUR MISSIONARY

Boldness

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How would you describe the character of the Apostle Paul? Many would consider him the paragon of missionaries. Besides his abundant labors, he also showed his character by his response to Agabus's prediction of his death: "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself" (Acts 20:24). What is the makeup of this man whose life included countless beatings, numerous imprisonments and near-death experiences, beatings with hard rods, and lashes from long, skin-shredding whips? Besides these sufferings he also faced incessant danger from being both in the city and in the wilderness, with both vicious people and ferocious wild beasts – and all because of the Gospel. Was he timid, fearful, and easily cowed? If this description of his experiences was not inspired Scripture, we would doubt that any one man could suffer so much. With this knowledge of Paul's resolute bravery, we would not expect his next prayer request, a request he makes more than once. He urges the Ephesians with these words: "[Pray] for me, that utterance may be given unto me, **that I may open my mouth boldly**, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: **that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak** (Eph. 6:19-20)."

The request is to pray for boldness! But Paul seems to be a bold man. It seems contradictory, doesn't it? But in reality it is totally sensible. Let's put the request in perspective. How often have you and I shrunk back from a bold presentation of the Gospel, or even a timid presentation? We are often embarrassed by our fear, hesitancy, and anxiety. We need boldness, and we know it. But Paul? Evidently he too sensed an ongoing need for boldness, and he knew that only God could give it and that He would give it in answer to prayer.

If the fearless Paul needed prayer, then every missionary you know needs prayer to be bold as a lion. When you next pray for a missionary (and hopefully that will be soon), pray for him to open his mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the Gospel. By the way, how about yourself? Do you need boldness? Now you know what to do – pray for it!