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The Prayer Of Every Pastor
Col. 1:9-12

Paul the apostle opened up in the usual letter writing of the day with a prayer of thanksgiving where he told the Colossians that he and Timothy were giving thanks to God and Father of Jesus Christ always on their behalf since they day they heard of their faith in Christ and love towards all the saints because of the hope laid up for them in heaven, as proclaimed through the gospel. vs. 3-5

Then he acknowledged that the very gospel they had embraced was bringing forth fruit in their lives as it was in all the world, where it had been proclaimed. vs. 6

This news had come to Paul by way of Epaphras, who is called a dear fellow bondsman and faithful minister or servant of Christ on their behalf, especially their love in the Spirit. vs. 7

* Without doubt Epaphras was the Pastor of Colosse and care for them very much, as Paul declares. 4:12-13

Having finished with his prayer of thanksgiving, Paul breaks out into a prayer of intercession for the Colossians, which is marked by four clear petitions.

- I. Prayer for their spiritual perception. vs. 9
- II. Prayer for their spiritual posture. vs. 10
- III. Prayer for their spiritual power. vs. 11
- IV. Prayer for their spiritual praise. vs. 12
* Paul's prayer for the Colossians runs from 1:9-14

I. Prayer for their spiritual perception. vs. 9

- A. The prompting of Paul's intercession for the Colossians was that he and Timothy had heard of their genuine faith in Christ. vs. 9a-c
 - 1. The phrase for this reason, looks back to the previous verse, the fact that Epaphras had told Paul and Timothy of the Colossians love in the Spirit. vs. 9a
* Paul mentions hearing of their faith numerous times. vs. 4, 5, 6
 - 2. Paul and Timothy had been praying for them since the day they heard of their faith. vs. 9b
 - a. Paul knew that once a person is born again, they needed to be prayed for, knowing the spiritual warfare that a believer is born into.
 - b. Paul more so now, knowing the attack on the Colossian church by those who were attempting to dethrone Jesus from His sum total of deity, is praying specifically.

3. Paul declares that they did not cease to pray for them and ask God for them. vs. 9c-d
- a. The word pray “proseuchomai” is used for prayer in general to God never to man.
 * The word is used by Jesus as He prayed to the Father and Paul uses it in asking the Colossians to pray for him and Timothy. Matt. 14:23, Col. 4:3
- b. The word ask “aiteo” means to call or beg.
 1) The word is in the middle voice and refers to something to be given, not done, giving prominence to the thing asked for, rather than the person and it denotes an asking to which one is entitled to. Robertson & Linski
 2) Jesus used the word for our asking God in persistent prayer, “Ask and it shall be given to you”. Matt. 7:7
 3) James uses it for asking God for wisdom. Ja. 1:5
- c. The apostle Paul uses both general prayer and specific for the Colossians, knowing their particular needs and circumstances with the false teaching.
 * This was Paul's practice for all the saints as evidence of his love.

Rom. 1:8-9, Eph. 1:15-16, Phil. 1:3-5

- B. The particular petition was that they may be filled with the knowledge of His will. vs. 9d
1. Paul uses two words that the heretics were using to teach the need of special and secret knowledge beyond Christ.
 a. The word filled “pleeroo” means to fill to completeness or the top, the idea is to be totally filled so as to have no room for anything else.,
 1) It is used for fulfilled prophecy. Matt. 1:22, 2:15, 17
 2) It is used of the odor of the ointment that filled the house at the anointing of Christ's feet. Jn. 12:3
 3) It is used for our being continually filled with the Holy Spirit. Eph. 5:18
 4) It is used for by Paul of Archipus in fulfilling his ministry. 4:17
 * Four other times in the letter. 1:9, 25, 2:10, 4:12, 17
- b. The other is knowledge “epignosis” means thorough and full knowledge which grasps the individual and a mark of ongoing maturity.
 1) This is not worldly knowledge through philosophy, traditions, and

- principles of the world were being propagated and still are, for they opposes God's word. 2:8
- * Though we cannot deny the ever-increasing knowledge of man, neither can we deny the ever-increasing problems it has created.
- 2) This is knowledge that is contained in God's word about Himself, man and sin.
 - 3) This knowledge would help them see through the deception, as well as oppose it. Eph. 1:17
- c. The knowledge is specified, the knowledge of God's will.
- 1) It implies that the will of God can be known and obtained.
 - 2) It corrected the false teaching of the heretics that were attempting to detour the Colossians from the complete will of God. 4:12
 - 3) The problem was not knowing the will of God but having the right relationship to God, through Christ, who reveals the will of God. Rom. 12:1-2
2. Paul qualifies this knowledge, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. vs. 9d

- a. The word wisdom "sohpie" is the general principle of broad intelligence and.
 - 1) It is used six times in the letter. 1:9, 28, 2:3, 23, 3:16, 4:5
 - 3) Vines describes it as having insight into the true nature of things and Thayers as having a broad and full intelligence.
- b. Spiritual understanding "sunesis" is the process and faculty of deciding in particular cases by insight, to arrive at the correct or best solution, critical judgment, which the believer is assured in Christ to its fullness. 2:2
 - 1) knowledge without wisdom and understanding is destructive.
 - 2) The combination is spiritual apprehension, comprehension and application of God's word to one's life in contrast to fleshly wisdom.
- b. The Gnostics depended on mere intellectual and specially revealed knowledge, yet their understanding of the things of God were based on speculation and opinion, therefore distorted and twisted.

Illustration

One night Mike's parents overheard this prayer.
 "Now I lay me down to rest, and hope to pass
 tomorrow's test, if I should die before I wake, that's
 one less test I have to take."

* That is not the way to pray for spiritual
 perception but rather to be filled with the
 knowledge of His will!

Application

1. Each of us are to pray as Paul prayed for all
 saints to be fill with the knowledge of God's will
 without ceasing. 1Cor. 1:4-5, Eph. 1:17, 3:4, Phil.
1:9, 1Thess. 5:17

- a. The purpose of prayer is never to get my
 will done, but to alien myself with the will
 of God and it be done.
- b. My people are destroyed for the lack of
 knowledge. Hosea 4:6a

2. The knowledge of God's will that is revealed to
 us is found in the word of God.

- a. He wills our sanctification. 1Thess. 4:3
- b. He wills that we give thanks in everything.
1Thess. 5:18
- c. He wills that we be not unequally yoked. 2
Cor. 6:14
- d. He wills that we be not deceived. Eph. 4:14
- e. He wills that we love our wives, husbands,
 children. Col. 3, Eph. 5-6
- f. He wills that we be fair to our employees
 and employers. Col. 4, Eph. 6
- g. He wills that we glory in him. 1Cor. 1:31

* At times some say, "if God would appear
 to me I would obey him," let's be
 practical and admit that if we have not
 obeyed what he has revealed to us in the
 scriptures, I don't think we have to worry
 about him appearing to us.

3. The will of God come by studying the full
 counsel of God Acts. 20:27

- a. Doctrine and God's will go together. Jn.
7:17
- b. We are commanded as well as exhorted to
 study.
 - 1) We are to tudy to show... 2Tim. 2:15
 - 2) All Scripture is given by God... 2Tim.
3:16-17
 - 3) This book of the law shall not depart out
 of your mouth; but you shall meditate
 therein day and night. Josh. 1:8
- c. We are to walk in wisdom towards those
 who are outside, redeeming the time. Col.
4:5, Ja. 1:5, 3:17
- d. Solomon is a classic example
 - 1) It was his Father's prayer for him that
 God give him wisdom and understanding
1Chron. 22:12-13
 - 2) It was Solomon's request to God as king.
2 Chron.1:10
 - 3) Solomon commanded the child to be out
 in two, knowing the real mother would
 respond in love and compassion for the
 child. 1Kings 3:25

4. The Source of knowledge, wisdom and understanding is Christ.

- a. We are to teach every man in all wisdom. Col. 1:28
- b. Tells us that it in Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Col. 2:3
- c. The word of Christ is to dwell in us richly in all wisdom. Col. 3:16
- b. We are in Christ and he is made unto us wisdom. 1 Cor. 1:30
- e. God will give to us the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, Christ. Eph. 1:17
- f. We are to show the angels in heaven the wisdom of God in and through us. Eph. 3:10
- i. The Lord gives understanding to us. 2Tim. 2:7
 - * Why? Because in Christ we are complete, being all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Col. 2:9-10

Paul prayed for their spiritual perception!

II. Prayer for their spiritual posture. vs. 10

- A. Paul states the purpose of his previous petition, that they may walk worthy of the Lord. vs. 11
 - 1. The word to walk “parapateo” means to order ones behavior.

- a. The tense is the aorist, it is not descriptive but a decisively final, “so as to walk: once and for all, corresponding to the previous aorist “to be filled”, the former is the result of the latter.
 - b. The request is in view of the new birth, therefore not impossible but very obtainable.
- 2. The manner of walk is worthy of the Lord.**
- a. The word worthy “axios” speaks of being proportioned in weight, we in our lives are to equal the Lord’s character, Christ-like.
 - b. In other words, my practice is to match my position in Christ, not that it is speaking of any personal worth to be accepted. 2:6-7, 3:2,5, 3:10,16-17
- 3. The extent or degree is described as fully pleasing Him.**
- a. The phrase appears only this time in the New Testament.
 - 1) In classical Greek meant pleasing others before yourself.
 - 2) The deception is that while a person’s walk may satisfy the scrutiny of men, it may not be all pleasing to God, for He alone sees in our hearts with satisfaction.

- 3) Doctrine and ethics are inseparable and right thinking results in right conduct!

B. Paul states that a worthy walk has both quality and quantity. vs. 10c

1. The quality of the worthy walk that is all pleasing to God is one that is being fruitful in every good work.
 - a. The same word is used of the Colossians present fruit bearing. vs. 6
 - b. The apostle is not saying that they weren't bearing fruit any more but only that past and present things must continue in the future.
 - * The gospel bears fruit continuously, present tense.
 - c. This is the mature of the good news , the gospel, once planted in the heart of the believer it bears fruit in every good work in and of itself, if we yield our members as instruments of righteousness. Rom. 6:19
2. The quantity of the worthy walk that is all pleasing to God is also one that is increasing in the knowledge of God. vs. 10d
 - a. The word increasing "auxano" simply means to cause to grow or augment.
 - b. The context is speaking about growing in the knowledge of God in

the sphere in which spiritual growth takes place.

- 1) The word knowledge "epignosis" is the same as in verse nine, complete thorough knowledge about God and the things of God.
- 2) The believer is to mature yet know that he never arrives until he or she are present with the Lord! Phil. 3:12-14
- c. The clear teaching is that both must exist for it to be pleasing to God, quantity and quality is God's will.
 - 1) Living things grow.
 - 2) Living things develop.
 - 3) Living things mature.

Illustration

Johnny had been misbehaving and was sent to his room. After a while he emerged and informed his mother that he had thought it over and then said a prayer. "Fine," said the pleased mother. "If you ask God to help you not misbehave, He will help you." "Oh, I didn't ask Him to help me not misbehave," said Johnny. "I asked Him to help you put up with me."

Another little boy was overheard praying: "Lord, if You can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a real good time like I am!"

* Is this the way you pray, rather that God change you?

Application

- 1.** The walk that is worthy and all pleasing to the Lord, is the outgrowth of being filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and understanding, as the Holy Spirit is guiding his or her life.
 - a.** We are to walk in the newness of life. Rom. 6:4
 - b.** We are to walk worthy of the calling which we were called. Eph. 4:1
 - c.** We are to walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise. Eph. 5:15
 - 1)** Negative, not in darkness, after the flesh, as gentiles, in sin or disorder.
 - 2)** Positive, in light, truth, in Christ, in the Spirit and love.
 - d.** We are all children of the light, and children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober. 2Thess. 5:5-6
 - * Sight and a clear head are essentials for walking worthy and pleasing to God, which He provides.
- 2.** The life that is worthy and all pleasing to the Lord bears much fruit and it remains, these are the very words of Jesus to His disciples and the reason for choosing them. Jn. 15:15:16

- a.** Jesus said, "You will know them by their fruits, a good tree brings forth good fruit..." Matt. 7:16-20
- b.** Father is glorified when we bear much fruit. Jn. 15:8
- c.** We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. Eph. 2:10
- d.** The fruits of righteousness are by Jesus Christ. Phil. 1:11, Rom. 12:1-2
- 3.** The life that is worthy and all pleasing to the Lord is one that is growing in the knowledge of God.
 - a.** The believer is to grow to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Eph. 4:13
 - b.** Paul tells the Philippians that they are to let love abound more and more in knowledge. Phil. 1:9
 - c.** Grace and peace are multiplied through the knowledge of Christ and divine power for life and godliness. 2 Pet. 1:2-3
 - d.** Peter exhorts all to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 2Pet. 3:18
- 4.** Jesus is our example not man.
 - a.** Jesus said, "I do always those things that please the Father." Jn. 8:29
 - b.** Jesus said, I came down from heaven, not will, but the will of him that sent me. Lo, I come (in the volume of the book, it is

written of me, to do Your will, Oh God. Jn. 6:38, Heb. 10:7

- c. We are to abound more and more in our walk and pleasing God. 1Thess. 4:1
- d. Paul tells us that a soldier doesn't entangle himself with the affairs of this life, in order to please the one who chose him to be a soldier. 2Tim. 2:4
- e. We receive in prayer because we are pleasing in his sight. 1Jn. 3:22
- f. The Scriptures tells us that before Enoch was translated he had this testimony, that he pleased God. Heb. 11:5

Paul prayed for their spiritual posture!

III. Prayer for their spiritual power. vs. 11

- A. Paul prayed for their dependability on God's power. vs. 11a-b
 - 1. The petition is to be strengthened "dynamoo" which means to be made strong with the potential available by virtue of it's own nature and inherent power, God's.
 - 2. The extent is with all might "kratos" the power to be in control is available to us, namely by the Holy Spirit by a continuous empowerment enabling the believer. 1:29, 2:12

* All failure is due not to the Holy Spirit but to us, failing to trust and depend on Him. Eph. 6:10

- 3. The degree is according to God's glorious power, for the things He calls us to do, not ours. Phil. 4:13
 - a. In proportion to our need and in proportion to God's abundant supply, the might of His glory! Eph. 3:20-21
 - b. There is nothing too hard for God, whatever situation or condition He calls us to and to work in and through us.
 - 1) And God said, let there be light: and there was light. Gen. 1:3
 - 2) Egyptians destroyed in Red Sea. Ex. 15:6-8
 - 3) Dividing of Jordan in flood time. Josh. 3
 - * Naaman the leper, Shunamite's son, smiting of the Syrian army with blindness, or the going back of the sun ten degrees.
- B. Paul prayer had a purpose. in order to manifest God's power in and through the believer. vs. 11c
 - 1. By manifesting all patience through an earthen vessel.
 - a. All patience "hupomone" is in respect to trials, circumstances and situations.

- b. It is more than enduring, it is the opposite of cowardice and despondency, contending with the obstacles in perseverance bravely and seeing things through, learning and growing without succumbing.
- 2. By manifesting all long-suffering through an earthen vessel.
 - a. All long-suffering “makrothumia”, is in respect to people and means to hold out long against provocation.
 - b. It is a decisive action, opposite of wrath, a spirit that bears up under injury and insult without retaliation. Heb. 10:36-37, Ja. 5:7-8
 - * God is long-suffering not willing that any should perish... 2 Pet. 3:9
- 3. By manifesting both of these with joy.
 - a. Here is the ultimate proof for our walking with God, for it is evidence of fellowship with Him.
 - 1) And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. 1Jn. 1:4
 - * We have fellowship with the Father, Son and each other.
 - 2) Not some cold endurance to demonstrate dedication as the Stoics
 - b. Joy is not premised on the situation or possession of things, but on who is in

me, joy comes from within, happiness comes from without.

- 1) Joy is the first manifestation of Agape love, the fruit of the Spirit and the evidence of fellowship with God, not the circumstances. Gal. 5:22, 1Jn. 1:3-4
- 2) Paul and Silas were singing in prison. Acts 16
- 3) For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Rom. 14:17
- 4) Paul clearly reveals this in his epistle to the Philippians, called the epistle of joy! Phil 1:18, 2:17, 3:1

Illustration

A little boy's prayer. "Dear God, please take care of my daddy and my mommy and my sister and my brother and my doggy and me. Oh, please take care of yourself, God. If anything happens to you, we're gonna be in a big mess."

* This is to be our attitude towards the power of God for everything we do!

Application

- 1. Have you been seeking God about a particular area or situation but you don't want Him to empower you but to remove it from you.

* God told Paul My grace is sufficient. 2Cor. 12:9

2. Do you realize that God wants all the glory, for your own protection.

* But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not us. 2Cor. 4:7

3. When we fail in what we are called to do and stand up against, we reveal one thing.

* If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small, not our but God's. Prov. 24:10

4. Weakness results from one of two things, a refusal yield or a disciplined neglect to exercise spiritually!

* For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Heb. 5:13-14

5. We are born into spiritual warfare.

* Finally my brethren, be strong in the Lord and the power of his might... Eph. 6:10

Paul prayed for their spiritual power!

IV. Prayer for their spiritual praise. vs. 12

A. Paul prayed that they would be giving thanks to God the Father. 1:12

1. The object of thanks is the Father, He is the source of all blessings. Eph. 1:3, Acts 2:23

a. He is the One who qualified us “hikanoo”, which means to make us sufficient, fit or competent to be partakers of the inheritance in the saints in the light.

1) The word is only found two times in the New Testament, to make able ministers. 2Cor. 3:6

2) The way He did it was by accepting us in the beloved. vs. 13-14, Eph. 1:6

* The Father is holy and He made Jesus to be sin for us, who knew no sin... 2Cor. 5:21

b. Jesus said he came to reveal the Father.

1) He came to make a way to the Father. Jn. 14:6

2) That we might worship the Father in Spirit and truth. Jn. 4:23

3) And to bring us into fellowship with the Father. 1Jn. 1:3

2. The reason for thanks is that we are partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

a. The word partakers “klerou” a portion or lot, after the Old Testament concept of land inheritance.

- b. It is after the counsel of his own will being predestined. Eph. 1:11
 - 1) Paul prays our eyes be open to the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. Eph. 1:18
 - 2) Peter says it is incorruptible, undefiled, fades not away, reserved in heaven. 1 Pet. 1:4
 - 3) And that is why Paul can say that we are heirs and joint-heirs with Christ. Rom. 8:17

B. Paul points out the distinctness of the inheritance of the believer.

- 1. The inheritance belongs to the saints.
 - a. The word saints as we have noted is the word “hagios” which means to set apart or separate.
 - b. The ones who qualify for this inheritance are those who have been set apart by God’s doing not their own.
 - c. An inheritance is secure only after one is dead, and so as Christ died for us, He willed all that pertained to Him to us, being an eternal inheritance. Heb. 9:15-18
 - * This is what Paul was commissioned to preach to the gentiles. Acts 26:17-18
- 2. The inheritance is in the sphere of light.

- a. I we claim this inheritance then our relationship with God is in the light.
- b. God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 1Jn. 1:5c
- c. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 1Jn. 1:6
- d. We are children of the light and of the day. 1Thess. 5:5
 - 1) Light speaks of knowledge.
 - 2) Light speaks of morally upright.
 - 3) Light speaks of purity.
 - 4) Light speaks of wisdom.
 - * The only way a person can know how much is left to him in an inheritance is to read the will, and so Paul saying, you want to know how rich you are, read the word of God that is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. Acts 20:32

Illustration

A five-year-old said grace at family dinner one night. "Dear God, thank you for these pancakes." When he concluded, his parents asked him why he thanked God for pancakes when they were having chicken. He smiled and said, "I thought I'd see if He was paying attention tonight."

* He always paying attention to see if you and I are being thankful!

Application

1. We are called to inherit many things.
 - a. A kingdom. Matt. 25:34
 - b. Eternal life. Matt. 19:29, 1Jn. 5:20
 - c. The promises of God. Heb. 6:12
 - d. The blessing of God. 1Pet. 3:9
 - e. All things. Rev. 21:7
2. The believer is to be thankful to God.
 - a. Paul is a classic example of giving thanks to God in this letter. 1:3,12, 2:7, 3:15,17, 4:2
* 1Cor. 15:57, 2Cor. 1:11, 3:14, 8:16, 2Thess. 2:13
 - b. It is a mark of being filled with God's word and Spirit. Eph. 5:18-20, Col. 3:16-17
 - c. In everything we are to give thanks, that is the will of God. 1Thess. 5:18
 - d. We are to give thanks for all men. 1Tim. 2:1
 - e. We are to enter his gates with thanksgiving. Ps. 100:4
 - f. We are to thank God for those who come to Christ. 2Thess. 2:13
3. The Old Testament gives witness to the giving of thanks to God by his people.
 - a. We are to give thanks to God among the heathen and sing praise to his name. Ps. 18:49
 - b. We are to give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness, forever. Ps. 30:4

- c. Says it is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord. Ps. 92:1
- d. We are to give thanks unto the Lord for He is good. Ps. 106:1
- e. We are to rise up at midnight and give thanks to God for his righteous judgments. Ps. 119:62
- f. Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto Your name. Ps. 140:13
- g. Daniel gave thanks to God, knowing that it might cost him his life, three times a day. Dan. 6:10.
- h. Jesus gave thanks to the Father. Lk. 10:21, Jn. 11:41
- i. Thankfulness is evidence of being God-centered and not self-centered.
* Paul's four-fold prayer for them was in order to bring about an ongoing transformation of life, each built upon the other, in order that they be able to recognize truth from error!

Paul prayed for their spiritual praise!

Conclusion

Paul's prayer of intercession for the Colossians is marked by four clear petitions.

- I. Prayer for their spiritual perception!
- II. Prayer for their spiritual posture!
- III. Prayer for their spiritual power!
- IV. Prayer for their spiritual praise!

* This is my prayer for You!