

Let Us Pray
Colossians 1:9-11

INTRO: The need of prayer is so very great. Great men of the past have expressed the great need of prayer:

John Wesley: "God does nothing but by prayer, and everything with it."

D. L. Moody: "Every great movement of God can be traced to a kneeling figure."

Jonathan Edwards: "There is no way that Christians, in a private capacity, can do so much to promote the work of God and advance the kingdom of Christ as by prayer."

Prayer is not only important for the individual believer; it is important to the local church. E. M. Bounds said: "the church that is dependent on its past history for its miracles of power and grace is a fallen church." The thing that makes truly great churches is prayer and commitment to the kingdom work. True greatness is based on pleasing God and advancing His kingdom.

Prayer is the one thing that all believers can minister with. You do not have to have a PHD to pray!

Let me encourage you to have a prayer ministry. I Thessalonians 5:17 says: "Pray without ceasing."

Here in Colossians, Paul reminds us to the importance of prayer. In verses 9-11, we have the prayer of desire!

I. VS 9a, THE EXPLANATION OF THE PRAYER

A. Paul had never met the saints at Colossae, yet he prayed for them.

1. What Paul knew about the salvation, growing faith and love of these dear ones came from their minister Epaphras (vs 7-8).
2. Paul knew of the terrible heathen conditions at Colossae; thus he often thought of and prayed for these dear saints.

B. In verses 3-4, Paul thanked God the Father and God the Son for the believers at Colossae.

1. He prayed and prayed for them and prayed some more for them.
2. He had heard of their faith. Salvation is by grace through faith (Eph 2:8-9; Titus 3:5).
3. There are those who I pray for because they are saved; there are others I pray for because they are lost and I desire their salvation.

II. VS 9b, THE EXPRESSION OF PAUL'S DESIRE

- A. He desired that the believers at Colossae experience a filling; he desired that they be filled.
 - 1. Filled is the Greek word *pleroo* which means to be controlled.
 - 2. When the disciples prayed in Acts 4:31, God answered and filled them and they were controlled by the Holy Ghost.
- B. Paul desired that the saints at Colossae be filled with "knowledge."
 - 1. "Knowledge" is the Greek word *epignosis* meaning "a deep and thorough knowledge, a mature spiritual experience." II Peter 3:18 says: "But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."
 - 2. We cannot have the kind of knowledge Paul speaks of without the revelation of God. Friends, the scriptures, the Word of God, the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation is the revealing of God's plan for man.
 - 3. We need a Biblical knowledge to face the secular society in which we live.
 - a. The Bible is the absolute authority for life. The Bible gives us absolutes.
 - b. "Ignorance is not bliss, nor can anyone please God on the basis principles they do not know" (MacArthur 28).
 - c. Teachers keep teaching the Bible lesson. Mom's and dad's keep singing, reading, and living the Gospel.
- C. "Knowledge of the will of God."
 - 1. Jesus prayer: "Not my will, but thine, be done" (Lk 22:42). Should not we pray the same? The model prayer says: "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Mt 6:10).
 - 2. What is God's will?
 - a. That His sheep be saved (Jn 10:14-15, 27-28; I Tim 2:4).
 - b. It is God's will that we be filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:17-18).
 - c. God wills for us to be thankful (I Thes 5:17).
 - d. Suffering is at times the will of God (I Pet 4:19).
 - e. These and many other passages speak of God's will for His people.

- D. “Wisdom,” we need to be knowledgeable of the Word of God so that we can be wise. Wisdom is seeing life from God’s perspective. Without an inerrant Bible you cannot be wise.
- E. “Understanding,” this is putting into practice the principles of the Word of God. This is application of God’s precepts.

III. VSS 10-11, THE OUTCOME OF SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE

- A. Vs 10, In this verse, we have three consequences of Biblical knowledge.
 - 1. A walk that is well pleasing to God. Knowledge is a means to an end. Knowledge is to lead us to practical living, living for our Lord who died for us.
 - a. Walking is an outward expression of faith within.
 - b. Knowledge of the Word of God is to lead us to Christian activity.
 - c. We are to walk in His way (Acts 19:9, 23; 22:4).
 - 2. “Fruitful in every good walk. . . .”
 - a. Romans 15:26-28 speaks of giving us fruit.
 - b. Hebrews 13:15 says that praise is fruit: “By him let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.”
 - c. Souls saved are counted as fruit (Phil 4:17).
 - d. A right attitude or attitudes are fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23).
 - 3. “Increasing in the knowledge of God.”
 - a. In Bible School, we sing: “I love Him better every day.’ This is increasing in knowledge.
 - b. You will not increase in knowledge without a steady diet of the Word of God (Psa 119:97, “Oh how I love they law! It is my meditation all the day.”).
 - c. As your knowledge of God increases, so will your faith (II Thes 1:3, “. . .your faith groweth exceedingly.”)
- B. Vs 11, The last two purposes for spiritual knowledge that Paul gives are those of strength, “Strengthened with all might. . . ,” and perseverance.
 - 1. “Strengthened,” we need the power of God upon our lives every day.
 - a. “Glorious” Greek *doxa*. God’s attributes made real.
 - b. “Might,” capability for action available to the believer—Greek *dunamis*.

- c. “Power” Greek *kratos* meaning “force, strength, great power.” The believer has great power to live for Christ. The church has great power to minister (Acts 1:8).
- 2. Perseverance. The saint of God has these enduring qualities through Biblical knowledge.
 - a. “Patience”– strength to endure the storms of life.
 - b. “Longsuffering”– to put up with. Trench says: “. . . refers to patience with people” (198).
 - c. “Joyfulness”– Greek *chara* meaning “gladness, joy received, of persons who are ones joy.”
 - 1- “The joy of the Lord is my strength,” for He is my joy.
 - 2- Do you have Him?

CONCLUSION: Paul’s prayer for the believers at Colossae is my prayer for you.