

A Worthy Walk Part 1

Text: Colossians 1:9-10a

Introduction

1. Brief review of theme, background & previous lesson
2. This lesson: Paul's prayer of for the Colossians spiritual advancement.
3. The centrality of prayer in the Apostle's life
 - He prayed much for believers
 - He prayed primarily concerning spiritual, eternal matters
4. The importance of praying for other believers: Consider the many biblical examples.
5. Let's travel back in time to Paul's prison cell and watch him pray for the Colossians.

We will observe 4 key lessons in this prayer...

I. United Prayer – “we also” (Vs. 9a)

A. The Associates

1. Timothy (1:1)
2. Epaphras (1:8; 4:12-13)
3. Tychicus (4:7)
4. Onesimus (4:9)
5. Aristarchus (4:10)
6. Marcus (4:10)
7. Justus (4:11)
8. Luke (4:14)
9. Note: Paul was rarely alone. He surrounded himself with a band of faithful men who could share the burden of the ministry with him.

B. The Application

1. There is power and blessing in united prayer.
 - a. Christ's Promise: Matthew 18:19-20 *“Again I say unto you, That **if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.** For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”*
 - b. The example of the early Church: Acts 1:14 *“These all continued with **one accord in prayer** and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.”* 2:42 *“And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in **prayers.**”*
 - c. The example of Moses, Aaron and Hur: Exodus 17:11-12 *“And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and **Aaron and Hur stayed up***

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his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.”

2. Don't neglect church prayer meetings!
3. John Phillips: “Those around him (Paul) found themselves caught up by him and swept into the throne room of the universe.”

II. **Motivated Prayer – “For this cause...since the day we heard it” (Vs. 9b)**

- A. Epaphras' report: The Colossian believers were a people characterized by:
 1. Faith in Christ
 2. Love for the brethren
 3. Hope in the Gospel
- B. Application
 1. The fact the Colossian believers had faith, love and hope indicates they were sincere, genuine Christians.
 2. The fascinating fact is that Paul was not merely content with that alone. His desire was to see the believers further established and grounded in the truth. He wanted to see them progress and grow in their Christian walk. He wanted to see a further deepening of spiritual life.
 3. Example: Paul's prayer for the Ephesian church
 - a. They had been blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (Vs. 3); They had been chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world (Vs. 4); They had been accepted in the beloved (Vs. 6); They had been redeemed by the blood and received forgiveness of sins (Vs. 7); They had obtained an inheritance (Vs. 11); They were sealed with the Holy Spirit (Vs. 13) etc...Revelation 2:1-5 indicates the Ephesian church was over all, a model church.
 - b. Yet, we find Paul praying for more! Refer Eph. 1:15-23 & Eph. 3:14-21

III. **Disciplined Prayer – “do not cease to pray for you and to desire” (Vs. 9c)**

- A. Habitual prayer
 1. “do not cease” (Vs. 9)
 2. “praying **always for you**” (Vs. 3) Note: the preposition ‘for’ has the idea of around. The Apostle surrounded the Colossian believers with his prayers.
 3. 1 Thessalonians 5:17 “Pray without ceasing.”
- B. Fervent prayer
 1. “to desire”
 - a. Means to ask, request, crave and beg.
 - b. ‘desire’ = incorporates the idea of making a request but also reveals the heart behind the request. It is a request that springs from the heart. Paul's emotions and feelings were involved.

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2. Epaphras' example: *“always labouring fervently for you in prayers”*
3. Note: “labouring fervently” = to strive, to agonize, to struggle, to wrestle. Same root word as “earnestly content” in Jude 1:3

IV. Focused Prayer – (Vs. 9d-10a)

- A. The Acquisition of Knowledge (knowledge possessed) (9d)
 1. The Type of Knowledge
 - a. Full knowledge – “be filled”
 - i. ‘be’ = the filling comes God
 - ii. The word ‘filled’ implies an emptying (e.g. human wisdom and philosophy)
 - iii. The word ‘filled’ implies to be governed or controlled by (e.g. Be filled with the Spirit)
 - b. Thorough knowledge – ‘knowledge’
 - c. Godly knowledge – “his will”
 - d. Application: That believer’s possess an in depth knowledge of their faith as expounded in the Word of God is of prime importance for Christian living!
 - i. Hos. 4:6 – God’s people were destroyed for lack of knowledge
 - ii. 2. Peter 1:5-6 – We are exhorted to diligently add knowledge to our Christian experience.
 - iii. Colossians 4:12 – Observe the focus of Epaphras’ prayer
 2. The Accompaniment of knowledge
 1. This knowledge is to operate in the realm/sphere of wisdom and understanding
 2. Wisdom = the right application of knowledge
 3. Spiritual understanding
 - a. Spiritual as opposed to carnal
 - b. ‘understanding’ = insight and discernment; the ability to discern the true from the false.
- B. The Application of Knowledge (knowledge applied) (10a)
 1. Note: This is where knowledge enters the realm of ‘wisdom’ and ‘spiritual understanding’. Godly knowledge is not an end in itself. It must translate into practical living.
 2. **Wisdom – Walk; Learning – Living; Position – Practice**
 3. Evangelist D.L. Moody said: “Every Bible should be bound in shoe leather.”
 4. ‘walk’ = frequent description of the Christian life. Refers to the activities of the Christian life. The outward life that men see. (Phillips)
 - a. A ‘worthy’ walk
 - i. Ephesians 4:1 *“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.”*
 - ii. 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 *“As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, That ye would work worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.”*

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- b. A 'pleasing' walk
 - i. 'all' = in every area, my entire life!
 - ii. 'pleasing' = Means to aim at, and go the length of, meeting every wish of the Lord's. In classical Greek it was used of one whose habit would be to do or say anything to please his superior; one who would seek not only to meet but to anticipate his most trivial wishes.
 - iii. Speaks of one who is sensitive to the heart of God. One who lives with a consciousness that He is the temple of God's Holy Spirit. One who desires to please God in everything.

Conclusion:

1. Examine the quality of your prayer life: Do they reflect a spiritual tone? Are you interceding for other believers?
2. Are you seeking to apply the Word of God to your life?