

Prayer To Continue To Grow in Grace (Col. 1:1-12)

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. In today's culture, it is extremely important that we know who Jesus is. There are so many opinions and voices that would attempt to tell us that Jesus Christ is not really Lord. A famous preacher once said, "***Jesus is either Lord of all, or He's not Lord at all!***" How true that is!
- B. The epistle to the Colossians was written by the Apostle Paul to help deal with false teaching that was threatening a young church. Apparently this false teaching was a blend of pagan occultism, Jewish legalism, and Christianity. This error taught that Jesus is merely one of many semi-divine beings, and that He was not fully God and fully man who had the authority and ability to change lives. They also taught that believers could achieve spiritual fullness through special knowledge and rigorous self-discipline.

II. TWELVE-FOLD PRAYER FOR GROWTH

- C. Paul begins his letter with a prayer of thanksgiving and a twelve-fold prayer for continual growth in grace in the Lord.

⁹For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy, giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." (Col. 1:9-12).

- D. As is the Apostle's customary way, he packs every sentence with powerful words and meaning that is so relevant for us today. Notice the twelve things he prays:

1. To be filled with the knowledge of His will (Col. 1:9).
2. To be filled with all wisdom (Col. 1:9).
3. To have spiritual understanding (Col. 1:9).
4. To walk worthy of the Lord (Col. 1:10).
5. To walk pleasing to the Lord (Col. 1:10).
6. To be fruitful in all good works. (Col. 1:10)
7. To increase in the knowledge of God. (Col. 1:10)
8. To be strengthened with all might (Col. 1:11).
9. To have His glorious power.
10. To have all patience (Col. 1:11).
11. To have all longsuffering (Col. 1:11).
12. To have joy (Col. 1:11).

- E. Let's expand a few of the thoughts and ideas that he prays for the early believers to see how they apply to us:

1. ***To be filled with the knowledge of His will*** (1:9)— How important it is that we know the will of God for our lives. The word “thelema” means, *what one wishes or determines to be done*. Paul prays that we would walk in wisdom and spiritual understanding. There is a “natural understanding” and there is a “spiritual understanding” (1 Cor. 1:10-14). It means that God would give us ***comprehensive insight into the ways and purpose of God*** for our lives.
2. ***To walk worthy of the Lord*** (Col. 1:10)— “Worthy” means, suitable or worthily, in a manner worthy of. Believers were called Christians by others in N/T times because their manner of life was completely opposite from the pagan culture around them.
3. ***Fully pleasing and fruitful in every good work*** (1:10)—This *a radical commitment of will, affection and disposition to completely please Christ in every detail of our lives*. It is Gal. 2:20 lived out in every aspect of our lives.
“I have been crucified with Christ; It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loves me and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20)
4. ***Increasing in the knowledge of God*** (1:11)—This is an encouragement for us to grow in the knowledge of God and not give way to a dull heart and mind. “Increasing” means *to become greater. To increase. To grow up*. You may have given your life to Christ in the past, but are you growing in grace and in the knowledge of God today? (2Pet. 3:18)
5. ***Strengthened with all might*** (1:11)—“Strengthened” and “Might” convey the idea of power, ability, might. These words are part of the “duna-power” words in the N/T (We get the word “dynamite” from these). Strengthened is the word “Dunamoo” which means to be able. To make strong. God will give us strength on the inside to live strong vibrant lives, and to overcome in every area where there is a need, being powerful witnesses for Him wherever we go, according to His glorious power.
6. ***With all patience, longsuffering and joy*** (Col. 1:11). The crowning virtues of the Christian life. Patience, longsuffering, and joy!