

Lessor # 7 -- Paul's Prayer for the Colossians - the Prayer for a Knowledge of God's Will.

Introduction

- A. Prayer is closely related to our most basic relationship in life.
 - 1. That relationship is the creation-redemptive basis of all life.
 - 2. Prayer is an expression of an implementation of this relationship.
 - 3. The one who does not pray is failing to express and receive many of the most important facets of the Christian life.
- B. We must keep before us that these prayers in the Bible are summaries of the will of God for us.

I. The Motivation of Paul's Prayer, Colossians 1:9.

- A. "For this cause" refers to the founding of the church and the character of the Christians at Colosse, Vs 3-8.
 - 1. The church was probably started by Epaphras.
 - 2. When he came to Rome to see Paul he told of the faith and love which characterized the saints at Colosse and of the threat of the false teaching in that area.
 - 3. The Apostle Paul responded to this information by thanksgiving and prayer.
- B. Paul's response to the news from Colosse is an indication of his loving concern for the people of God. He is an example to us. People and prayer were important to him.

II. The Primary Goal in Paul's Prayer

- A. The explanation of this goal.
 - 1. The need at Colosse and in the life of every believer in every age is the same: a knowledge of the will of God.
 - 2. The term refers to that knowledge particularly related to salvation and the Christian life.
 - 3. Paul prayed this knowledge would "fill" them (be applied in all areas of thought and action) and result in "all wisdom and spiritual understanding".

- a. "Wisdom" is spiritual insight into the truth.
- b. "Understanding" is spiritual discernment related to correct practices.

B. Illustrations related to this goal.

1. The false teaching denied the full deity of Jesus Christ, (Col. 2:8).

The truth is that Jesus Christ is the very image of God (1:15), the eternal and sovereign Creator (1:16,17), the One worthy of and receiving all preeminence (1:18), and the One in Whom is all the fullness of the Godhead personally (1:19) and physically (2:9).

2. The false teaching denied the full salvation of believers, (Col. 2:4,5,16).

The truth is that believers have full redemption in Jesus Christ (1:20-22), they are indwelt by Him (1:27), and are complete in Him (2:10). This means that all believers are cleansed (2:11), quickened (born again) (2:12,13), forgiven (2:13), justified from the demands of the Law of God (2:14), and delivered from Satan (2:15).

3. The false teachings, denied the full reality of the sanctification of believers, (2:18-23).

The truth is that all believers are raised in Christ and seated in the heavenlies (3:1-4). This means that believers can put to death the sinful pattern of action related to the Old Man (3:5-9) and put on the pattern of action related to the New Man (3:10-13), which is characterized by love (3:14), peace (3:15), enjoyable fellowship with God through his Word (3:16), and thanksgiving (3:17).

III. The Secondary Goal in Paul's Prayer, Colossians 1:10-12.

A. The explanation

There is in the Bible an intimate relationship between knowing the truth and practicing the truth. It is a sin when we fail to practice the truth we know. The one who consistently sins in failing to live correctly may be said to have a deficient knowledge or to have a serious hindrance in his daily life.

B. The illustrations.

1. Walking worthy of God, V10. (Ephesians 4:1-3).
2. Being fruitful in every good work, V10. (Galatians 5:22,23)
3. Increasing in the knowledge of God, V10. (II Peter 1:2-9)

4. Strengthened with all might unto joyfulness, V11. (Ephesians 1:18-20)

5. Giving thanks to the Father, V12. ((Ephesians 5:19,20)

IV. The Basis of Paul's Prayer, Colossians 1:12-14.

A. The explanation

Here Paul explains how it is possible for sinners to have such a knowledge and walk with God. The answer is very simple: God Himself made it possible by His loving provision in and through Jesus Christ.

B. The illustrations.

1. We have been made meet (qualified) to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, V12. (Acts 20:32) (Contract with Col. 1:21.)
2. We have been delivered from the power of darkness, V13. (Acts 26:18) (Contract with Ephesians 2:2,3.)
3. We have been translated into the Kingdom of his Dear Son, V13. (I Cor. 6:9-11) (Contract with Galatians 5:19-21.)
4. We have been redeemed through Jesus Christ and possess the forgiveness of sins, V14. (Colossians 2:13) (Contract with Romans 3:19.)

Conclusion

- A. We much accept by faith what God has done for us in our salvation.
- B. We much choose to practice the will of God in our daily lives.
- C. We must seek to grow day by day in the knowledge of the will of God.
- D. In order to honor God and live this way, we much surrender to God, establish correct priorities and then daily put our priorities into practice.