

Colossians 1:9-10

Prayer 1: Knowledge equals faithfulness

03/01/20

Open your Bibles, please to Colossians 1. I will read verse 3, then we will read from verse 9 through verse 14

Thanksgiving and Prayer

³We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you,

⁹And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. ¹¹May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, ¹²giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. ¹³He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. ¹

Last week, we noticed in verses 3 -8 why Paul prayed for these Colossians believers.....and let me encourage you to go on the website and listen to the sermon, if you missed..... Every sermon builds on the previous one..... and I hope and pray you will take advantage of keeping up....

remember:

Paul had never met the Colossians

Epaphras was the one who planted the church and pastored the church. He was in prison with Paul in Rome, and they had a lot of time to talk, and Epaphras was able to tell him all the great things that God had done in the lives of these dear people.....

So, what we have in the beginning of the letter is Paul expressing his prayerful thanksgiving for several things, then, later, he will move in the letter toward the concerns he has for the teaching that is coming into the churchAnd, as I have said before, Paul is going to battle the false teaching with a full and rigorous presentation of the absolute sufficiency of the Lord Jesus Christ.

¹ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. (2001). (Col 1:1–14). Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

That is the direction this letter is going.....but before he gets there, He is letting them know that he prays for them, he tells them why he prays for them, he tells them when he prays for them, and he tells them what he prays for them

We went over the why last week when we looked at verses 3-8....

He states in Verse 3 that "We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you," and the reason he prays in thankfulness according to verse 4 and 5 is because of the faith they have in Christ, the love they have for the saints, on account of the hope they have in heaven.

All of these are evidences of the fact that the true gospel had been preached by Epaphras, and heard, understood, learned, and believed by these men, women, and children in the city of Colossae. And the point I was making is "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, old things are passed away, and all things are become new." Belief in, faith in, trust in the true gospel changes lives.....

I pointed out last week that the elements of the true gospel that are essential to what we believe is that God is holy, man is in sin, Christ died as our savior, and we must repent and trust in substitutionary sacrifice for our sin.... And, when we do, our lives reflect the transformation..... we are delivered from darkness and brought into the light..... saved from death and given new life in Christ..... We will see this again and again throughout our study of this book....

And, it is on account of the gospel coming to Colossae and Paul hearing about it through his cell mate Epaphras, that Paul is now laboring in prayer for them....And it truly is a reminder that we need to pray for one another as believers....If Paul can be this concerned about those he has never met, how much more should we be praying for those we see on a regular basis....

and what a blessing it is to have this prayer, and others like them, recorded in Holy Scripture. it is blessing for us to get a small peek into Paul's private prayer life..... and with this peek we have an even better grasp of the things in life that are most important to Paul.....and what we will see as we study this is that what drove Him, what moved Paul, where Paul's heart was..... was for believers to both know God and to live for Him in their daily lives....

I want to say up front that this prayer of Paul's is a model to us..... Paul is praying for believers he has never met in a town he has never been, yet he is fully aware that since he is in Christ, and they are in Christ, that they are family..... and he is deeply concerned for the growth and health of His believing family..... As an apostle, he has a great concern for all others in the body of Christ.....

And, since this is a pattern or a model of prayer....as we walk our way through it, and begin to understand it, we will have a better grasp of how we should pray for one another.....

So, as we jump into Paul's prayer for these Colossian believers, I want you to first notice that there are really only two specific petitions in this prayer..... we know this by the word "May"..... and within each petition there are specific results that Paul desires to see happen when the petition is granted.....

Petition number one is in verse 9..... "And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you," here is the request, "asking that you **may** be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,".....Then the 2nd request is in verse 11, "**May** you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might."

Very simply, in Paul's first petition, he is asking God, begging God to fill the Colossian believers with a knowledge of God's Will, and his 2nd petition is that they would be strengthened with His Power.....he is, first, asking that they might know God and discern His will, and then he is asking God to give them the power to accomplish His will. You can almost reduce this down to "O, Lord: Help the Colossians know you; and give them the power to obey you...."

That is an easy prayer to remember.... Pray for me.... "Father, help Rick to know you and give him the power to obey you."

and, if the first prayer is answered, Paul will anticipate seeing these Christian believers begin living out verse 10..... "so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;²" You see, verse 9 is the prayer and verse 10 is the results of the answered prayer....

And if the 2nd prayer is answered, then the results Paul desires in their lives from being strengthened with His power is stated in the middle of verse 11, "for all endurance and patience with joy;¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light."¹³³

So, beginning in verse 9, there is one prayer, two petitions and each petition has some specific results.....This morning, we will only look at the first one.

And, the first thing I want you to see is that Paul's prayer that they might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all Spiritual wisdom and understanding is a direct attack on the false teaching that has come into the church.....It appears that these teachers have come in to the church and they have communicated that Christ is okay..... but there is more..... there is more

2 [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Col 1:10). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

3 [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Col 1:11–13). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

to be known about the Spirit world..... there is more to be known about the benefits of living a life of self denial..... there is more to be known about keeping human traditions, and Old Testament rituals..... there is a better knowledge, a better wisdom, a better understanding.....

Paul will eventually deal with their errors, But before he gets to these direct confrontations and direct attacks on the teaching they are being influenced by, he begins with prayer.

And his prayer is simply stating the fact that, "You do not need any special knowledge, special wisdom or special understanding..... the only knowledge you need is a genuine, full, complete, thorough knowledge of God and His will....." His prayer is a confrontation to the wrong teaching they are receiving.....

Now, I don't know about you... but I find this to be a challenge. I would much rather have an argument now about the truth.... And either pray later, or maybe not at all.....Yet, Paul starts with going to his heavenly Father; a reminder that we should, too.....;

Which shouldn't be a surprise to us.... Paul is engaged in a battle..... but it is God who opens blind eyes.....and in Ephesians 6, we are told that one of the weapons of our spiritual warfare is the weapon of prayer..... Paul tells us that our struggle is not against flesh and blood.....rather, it is against rulers, principalities, and powers and at the end of the day, he is not in a battle with the false teachers..... there is a battle going on in the cosmos for the hearts and lives of men and women, and Paul knows that to engage in the battle, he must cry out to God first....on their behalf

Paul had no problem arguing for, defending, and holding to the truth..... but he also fully understood that prayer was a weapon in the warfare of defending and holding on to spiritual truth, and it is where the battle must begin.....when you are engaged in ongoing discussions with those who are off or who are getting off doctrinally, are you as faithful to pray as you are to argue? Are you as faithful to pray as you are to send articles articulating the biblical position? Are you as faithful to pray as you are to defend?

when he prays, ...by using the word "filled," he is asking that these believers are filled full, or completely full with the knowledge of God's will..... and the knowledge that Paul is praying for is not solely an intellectual knowledge..... it is a full knowledge, a deeper knowledge, a complete knowledge, it is a knowledge that grasps and penetrates into an object.....it is a knowledge that has a thorough understanding of it's object..... in this case, the object is God's will.....

So, let me ask you, how do you know God's will? How do you discover God's will? How does God reveal his will to you? For some, you might immediately want to view this as, God directing you to buy this house instead of this house..... or directing you to move here instead

of there.....and sometimes young people are looking for a specific sign to know if it God's will to be married..... though all of these things are important, I don't want to minimize them..... however, being full of the thorough, complete knowledge of God's will is so much more.....

Paul is praying that they might know who God is, how he acts, and what he desires..... Don't forget, he is talking to believers..... this letter is written to Christians..... and he is praying that Christians will be filled full with the complete, thorough, and deep knowledge of God..... which is so much more than "what car should I buy, or where should I go to college or should I change jobs." He wants these born again Colossian believers to have an ongoing, deeper, more complete knowledge of God.. this is really the same thing Paul is saying about himself in Philippians 3

"that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death," What do you mean Paul, you already know God through Christ..... you are already a Christian.....Paul wants to know Him more.....

It is what Jesus prayed in John 17, first for his disciples....."And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." they already know him..... the prayer is they would know Him more...

I hope that is your heart beat this morning..... I hope this is your heartbeat when you leave and it continues the rest of the week.....It is the heartbeart of King David when he wrote, "As the deer pants for the water brook, so my soul pants for you, O God..... for the living God." We know he already knows God..... but he wants to know Him more and more and more.....

Beloved, where does knowledge of God come from? Where do we find complete knowledge, full knowledge, perfect knowledge.....It doesn't come from human man made tradition..... it does not come through philosophy..... it does not come through the heretical teaching that is infiltrating this church..... it does not come through visions, near death experiences, or sitting alone by a brook contemplating the sound of the water.....

The kind of knowledge that Paul is talking about here this full and complete knowledge comes to us by His Spirit, through His Word.....We cannot say, just through God's word because the natural man, the unsaved man with an open Bible cannot comprehend God's Word without the Spirit of God..... And, we cannot say just through the Spirit because the spirit never contradicts God's Word.....so, we need both

So, in essence, Paul is praying that these men and women, these Colossian believers will continue to immerse themselves in the teaching and preaching and study of God's Word with the help of the Holy Spirit.....so that they will be fully filled up in the complete knowledge of God's will.....

but, Paul does not stop there.... his prayer goes on and adds, "in all spiritual wisdom and understanding." . the phrase spiritual wisdom is a practical know how that comes from God..... it is the capacity to understand and act wisely.....it is acting according to God's will in an experiential manner.....Spiritual understanding is the faculty to decide particular cases.....it has the idea of discernment, or making the right judgment.....

This is the wisdom Solomon talked about throughout the book of Proverbs.... Go ahead and turn to Proverbs 2... I can easily read the entire passage..... but notice verse 6

For the LORD gives wisdom;

from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;

⁷ he stores up sound wisdom for the upright;

he is a shield to those who walk in integrity, ⁴

jump down to verse 10

for wisdom will come into your heart,

and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;

¹¹ discretion will watch over you,

understanding will guard you,

¹² delivering you from the way of evil,

from men of perverted speech,

¹³ who forsake the paths of uprightness

to walk in the ways of darkness, ⁵

Note that God gives wisdom; it comes from His mouth or His Word or the Bible..... it is described as a shield, it is pleasant, it watches you, guards you, delivers you from evil and perverted people... the passage goes on to say, it will deliver you from immorality... the smooth tongue of the adulteress..... It is spiritual wisdom and understanding coming from the mouth or word of God that gives you the grace to live for God....

And, when you put all of this together, Paul is praying that these Colossian believers will make right and sound judgments in the normal affairs of life, that they will order their lives in a way that is consistent with the revealed will of God by His Word and according to the direction and guidance of the Holy Spirit living in and through them..... WHICH QUITE HONESTLY IS BY PARTICIPATING IN THE NORMAL MEANS OF GRACE THAT I BEGAN THE SERVICE WITH.....IT STARTS WITH SITTING UNDER THE RIGHT PREACHING OF GOD'S WORD..

4 [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Pr 2:6–7). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

5 [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Pr 2:10–13). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

and he confirms that this is exactly what he means by this prayer by the expectations he has in the following verse in answer to His prayer

Verse 10, " so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. ⁶"

I see verse 10 as one major point, with 3 sub points..... The major point is: "So as to walk in a manner that is worthy of the Lord." Then he gives 3 subpoints that demonstrate this worthy walk..... a worthy walk pleases the Lord, a worthy walk bears fruit, and a worthy walk increases in knowledge of God. The pleasing, bearing and increasing are all part of walking in a manner that is worthy of the Lord.

Beloved, one of the first things that this tells us is that Right thinking about God should produce Right living for god..... Belief should always result in practice.....doctrine or knowledge and life are to go hand in hand....this is why it is not an intellectual knowledge.... this is why we don't just want to fill our minds up with information..... this is why Paul prayed for Spiritual wisdom and spiritual understanding, as well..... it is because our knowledge of God and his will should be changing us from the inside out.... it should be reflected in how we live.....

What, then, is a walk that is worthy of the Lord? The word walk, as you would imagine means to order one's behavior, or to conduct oneself.....to live or behave..... This word is a favorite of Paul's when he is instructing believers how to live..... In fact he uses it 3 other times in the book of Colossians.....and in every reference in the book of Colossians, the word Walk has to do with living or behavior.....

"Worthy" means, "having the weight of (weighing as much as) another thing." It means, "of like value, worth as much." Now, listen carefully..... one commentator states, "The saints are to see to it that their manner of life, their conduct, weighs as much as the character of their Lord. That is, He is to be their example in life, and the copy must be like the example." It is like putting you and your character on one side of the scale, and having the character of Christ on the other..... and the worthy walk means that your life should measure up to the life of Christ..... that is the result Paul is praying for.....

1 Peter 2:21 states, "For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps."

So the worthy walk is a walk that follows the life, example, and steps, of the Lord Jesus Christ.....but don't miss the crucial fact that you can't do this because you are trying harder.... You can't do this because of following a list of man made rules.... It is not because of following traditions or trying to live a monkish life of self denial..... living this kind of life is a result or a by

⁶ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. (2001). (Col 1:10). Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

product of a heart that desires a full, complete, biblical, spirit led knowledge and understanding of God. That is where it begins.....

Now, according to the rest of the verse, this walk that is worthy of the Lord is going to have at least 3 characteristics about it that will be visible and noticeable..... and the first one is that a person's life and conduct will be pleasing to God. The walk or life that is worthy of the Lord is a walk that is pleasing to Him.....

Now, it wasn't very long ago in the blogosphere of evangelicalism and in some of the books that were written that questions were raised about whether or not God is ever displeased with His believing children? Is God ever angry at his Children? And the answer of some was that, "No..... once you are in Christ, and God sees you through the lens of the righteousness of Christ, then he will never be angry or ever be displeased with you." no matter what you do....

Some Evangelicals were teaching and they continue to teach that it does not matter how you live because God's smile is always on you, he takes pleasure and delight in His people..... and seemingly, as far as what some were teaching, God is always smiling no matter how you lived your life.....He is always pleased with you because you are in Christ.....

Well, I am here to say, and more importantly, the Scriptures are very clear that God does get angry with His children, and if you recall the short phrase at the end of the narrative when David committed adultery with Bathsheba, had her husband Uriaah killed, then brought her into His home and married her and they had a child together, the final phrase in the narrative is

But the thing David had done displeased the LORD.⁷

Now, thankfully, as believers we are not under God's judicial anger and condemnation.....There is therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.....We do not fear hell.....we have been saved eternally from His divine wrath.....however, God, as a loving Father is displeased with us when we sin..... he does not take pleasure in us when we walk in disobedience.... we can grieve His Spirit, we can quench His Spirit, and the close intimate fellowship we have with him can be broken and strained due to our sin.....

and according to Hebrews 12, as a loving Father, he will discipline us and chastise us as sons.....to bring us humbly back to Him..... So, no, you can't live anyway you want and simply believe that God's smile is always on you.....

If that were true, why would Paul desire us to walk worthy?..... there is an automatic assumption that it is possible to walk in an unworthy manner..... and if indeed he desires us to be fully pleasing to Him, then it is possible to live in such a way that is not pleasing to Him.....

⁷ *The New International Version*. (2011). (2 Sa 11:27). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

And, this gets back to Christ being our example and our lives being weighed up against his..... There are some who just throw their hands up and say that you can't use Jesus as an example because he was perfect and we never can be.....and, in doing so they miss the whole point of Christ coming, living and dying.....

Now, of course perfection and absolute holiness and following Christ perfectly is not attainable..... and, let me say, too that the metaphor of walking also shows a learning curve.....and so does the idea of pleasing the Lord.....In Ephesians 5, Paul phrases it a little bit differently....He says "walk as children of the light, trying to discern what is pleasing to the Lord."

We give a lot of grace to children when they are learning how to walk..... and as believers, we do stumble and bumble, and fall and are off balance..... and we make decision from time to time that we think will be pleasing to the Lord, and we find we were wrong.....God is a gracious heavenly father, who knows our frame, knows our heart..... and as we are growing in greater knowledge of Him, our feet and our balance become more steady.....He is patient with us, as we are learning and growing in Christ...

But as my former pastor used to say.....and he said it often enough that I remembered it.....which is a reminder to me that if I repeat myself often enough, you just might remember something I say to you..... and if you were to remember anything, what I am about to say is worth remembering coming from the lips of Paul Steele who is now with the Lord in glory....

He would say, the moment we are justified or the moment Christ's righteousness is credited to our account, a holy transaction takes place and we are counted righteous.... Or he would say, we are "made positionally righteous in the sight of God..... " we are not practically righteous..... we still sin..... but, for the rest of the Christian life, you are becoming what you already are in Christ.....

and when you fail, you confess your sin and he is faithful and just to forgive you and to cleanse you of all unrighteousness..... and when you sin, you repent of your sin..... and you continue to ask Him to conform you into His image..... and when you read through the gospels and you see the Lord Jesus serving others, dying to self, living a life of self sacrifice, praying to His Father, saying no to temptation, you ask God to give you the grace to follow His example..... "O, God.... make me more like your dear son!"

And throughout your Christian life, God who authored your faith will continue as Paul says in Philippians, to "perfect your faith until the day of Christ Jesus." He will be sure you are becoming more and more of what you already are in Christ.....

so, the first result that Paul wants to see if his prayer for knowledge is answered is that they would live in a manner that is worthy of the Lord, and subsequently please him in every way....., the 2nd part of that worthy walk is....."bearing fruit in every good work."

Paul seems to be going back to the earlier part of Colossians chapter one when he basically states that those who have faith in Christ are going to bear fruit for Christ and here Paul simply reiterates that genuine believers will be obvious to all.....In Matthew 7 Jesus tells us that you will know someone by their fruits..... fruit is a by product of what a person really is..... When I planted my first garden, I did not mark or remember what plants were what.....so, I did not know what I planted until I saw the fruit from the plant..... Oh, it is that kind of squash? oh it is that kind of tomato.....Oh, did I plant a pepper plant?

The fruit proved what kind of plant it really was.....the fruit was a by product of the vine it grew on.....and what Paul is saying here is that when the prayer for knowledge of God's will with all spiritual wisdom and understanding is answered, and believers begin walking in a manner that is worthy of the Lord and they will please him in every way.....then visible fruit is a normal part of a worthy walk..... and, I do think that he is talking about the fruit of the Spirit described in Galatians 5, love, joy, peace, patience, and so on.....

when we live our lives among both Christians and non Christians is there a noticeable difference between us? Or do we laugh at the same jokes, use the same crude language, and have no distinct difference in how we talk, live our lives, we spend our time, our money, and what we do with our leisure.....Does being a Christian or having the label Christian mean anything or is it just a religious term?

There is even an assumption in this statement..... it actually says, "bearing fruit in every good work....." so the assumption is that as a believer, you will be involved in what Paul describes here as good work..... the phrase "good work or works" is used 23 times in the New Testament..... In the book of Acts, a lady named Dorcas was known for her good works of charity...or meeting the needs of those who could not meet their own needs..... In I Timothy 6, Paul encourages Timothy to tell those who are rich in this world to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share ⁸

In Titus Paul mentions that there are some who, "profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work."

It is a joy, as a pastor to see many involved at Grace in various good works.....providing meals for the new moms.....serving one another in ways that many of us never even hear about

⁸ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. (2001). (1 Ti 6:18–19). Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

Good works and obedience don't save you... but if you are saved, they are a by product or a result.....And, the whole point of this is that Paul believes that bearing fruit in every good work will be a by product of his prayer that we might know God more fully.....and is part of the life of the one who is walking in a manner worthy of the Lord....

Finally, a third part of this worthy walk is the last phrase of verse 10..... "increasing in the knowledge of God." This sounds almost odd and redundant..... Paul begins by asking that they might be filled with the knowledge of God's will..... then it closes out with "increasing in the knowledge of God."

I am already filled and being filled with the knowledge of god's will..... why do I need to continue to increase in the knowledge of God? I think there is a slight difference here that needs to be thought through.....Paul is no talking here about knowledge of God's will..... He specifically states knowledge of God.... knowledge of God is about His person..... His character..... His attributes..... who He is.....

AW Tozer picks up the idea of having a greater knowledge of God in the first chapter of His book, Knowledge of the Holy. The chapter is called, "we must think rightly about God." he writes, ,

"what comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.....the history of mankind will probably show that no people has ever risen above its religion, and man's spiritual history will positively demonstrate that no religion has ever been greater than its idea of God." And, if this is true in regards to people or nations, it is also true of churches and individuals.....Tozer goes on..... "We tend by a secret law of the soul to move toward our mental image of God. ...Always the most revealing thing about the Church is her idea of God, just as her most significant message is what she says about Him or leaves unsaid, for her silence is often more eloquent than her speech. She can never escape the self-disclosure of her witness concerning God."

So, why is Paul saying that a worthy walk will include an increase in the knowledge of God? Because the single most important thing in our lives is and will always be a true knowledge of the God of the Bible.....so you can get to know the God who created us, who redeemed us, who sustains, us who delivers us.....and it is absolutely true that whatever mental image we have of god will dictate how we live our lives.....

If he is the man upstairs, no reverence, no holiness, he is just a kind old man.....who doesn't really care what I do and if i do anything, he will approve..... if he always has a smile on His face then he is not Holy or Just, and if I cannot do anything to wipe the smile off, why not go out and live any way I want.....

but when we understand the god of the Bible..... in all of his glory..... his self-existence, his divine omniscience, his wisdom, his omnipresence, his faithfulness, goodness, justice, mercy, sovereignty.....the greater knowledge we have of Him, then the more we will revere him, love him, serve him, bow before him, and desire to walk in a manner that is worthy of His great name.

And, this is the beauty of the entire passage,..... Paul is not telling you and I to pick ourselves up by our bootstraps when we do not walk the worthy walk..... or we fail to live pleasing to Him.. or when we are not bearing fruit.... NO..... this begins with the prayer, "O God, please fill these Colossian believers with a full knowledge of Your will....."

and the results of that prayer being answered will be a deeper desire for greater knowledge of God..... and this in turn will result in a desire for a more worthy walk, to please the Lord and to bear much fruit..... which will result in a desire for a greater knowledge of god..... at the end of the day, Paul is praying that we will have a hunger for God that will never be satisfied. a knowledge of God that we will forever seek.....and as we get to know Him in all His fullness, it will have a profound effect on every aspect of our behavior..... because belief and practice go hand in hand....

So, the more you know Him..... the more you will desire to obey Him.....and the more you obey Him, the more you will want to know Him..... and the more you know Him..... the more you will desire to obey Him..... and the more you obey Him, the more you will want to know Him.....shall I go on.....

Genuine full knowledge of God is the breeding ground for the obedient heart..... and the obedient heart has greater longings for a more intimate knowledge of God.... So, at the end of the day, there is no greater prayer that we could ever pray for one another than, "O, Lord.....please, fill the believers at Grace Fellowship Church with a full knowledge of your will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.....that they might live and behave in a manner that is worthy of your great and holy name..... so they will please you in all they do, produce fruits of the Christian life..... and have a greater hunger and thirst to continue to know you until they see you face to face.....

I am doing all of us a disservice by not preaching the 2nd request..... "strengthened with all power...." why? because you need power, dunamis or dynamite power of the Holy Spirit for the first prayer to be answered...so, you will have to wait for the power until next Sunday.....

For now, your homework assignment is to pray for each other.....pray for me.....and ask God to give you a deep desire to know Him and to love Him and to obey Him

I continue to marvel, the older I get, and the more opportunity I have to study, preach, learn, and teach the Bible..... I continue to marvel at the direct result between Belief and behavior.....and as men and women who are predisposed to trying to earn our way to heaven or trying to be good enough to appease God, we so easily look for ways and formula's to do things on our own....

This was the problem in the Colossian church, and it is still a problem this day.....Because they had a diminished view of Christ, they were drawn to the worship of angels, and self denial, a works based, man centered list of traditions to help with their holiness....

And, Paul sets Christ above all of this.....and, for some, today, it sounds too simple.....simple but profound..... Everything we need for life and godliness is found in Jesus.....by believing in and trusting in Him, he lives in you and you live in Him.... And we will see next week that he has given the dynamite power walk in a manner pleasing to him..... to bear fruit in every good work and to increase in the knowelge of God....

Believe in Christ.... Know Christ..... exalt Christ, worship Christ.....and now we will sing about Christ.....