

PRAYER AS SOUL-SHAPING WITH GOD

POWER IN PRAYER | COLOSSIANS 1:9-17 | AUGUST 24/25, 2019 | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

*"For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you."
(Colossians 1:9)*

Shaped by Praying Regularly for Others (Colossians 1:9)

Shaped by Praying for Knowledge of God's Will (Colossians 1:9b)

Shaped by Praying to Live Worthy of the Lord (Colossians 1:10-14)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How would you define or describe what prayer is? Why is it important in our life with God?
2. This week we continue our series, "Power in Prayer," by looking at Paul's prayer in Colossians 1:9-14. Begin your study by asking God to speak to you through your study of Scripture. Then, whether you're alone or in a group, read that passage aloud.
3. This passage begins with "For this reason." What is the reason that Paul is referencing, found in verses 3-8?

4. It is important to know that Paul has never directly met these believers in Colossae (see 2:1), but has influenced them through the ministry of Epaphras (1:7-8; 4:12-13), as well as perhaps through his two-year ministry in Ephesus that touched large parts of Asia (see Acts 19:10). Even though this is the case, how does Paul describe his approach to prayer on their behalf in verse 9?
5. What is Paul's first request of God for these believers in the second half of verse 9?
6. What do you think Paul means by "knowledge of his will" here?
7. Why do you think it might be important to know that "the Spirit gives" this gift?
8. How have you seen God grow you in knowledge of his will over your life? How has that shaped the way you live?
9. Paul's second major prayer request builds off of knowledge of God's will: "so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way" (1:10). Why do you think Paul prays this for the Colossian believers, even though he may not know them personally?
10. In verses 10-12, there are four elements of Paul's prayer for them to live worthy by pleasing God in every way. What are they?
11. Given that pleasing God in every way is a major request of Paul, what areas of your life do you think you need to pray about more diligently in relation to this request?
12. Paul's prayer ends with a reflection in verses 13-14 on the reason for both wanting to live worthy (see 1:10) and the joy we have from God (see 1:12). How would you summarize the reason for our right living and our joy?
13. Take some time to reflect with the Lord on what He is speaking to you about prayer through this study. If you are on your own, write these things down and let this shape your prayer life in the days to come. If you are in a small group, discuss your answers aloud together. Close in prayer.

RESOURCES FOR PRAYER

Our life of prayer is fueled by accurate knowledge of God's will for believers. Read through these verses and use them as material in your prayer life, both this week and in the future:

- Psalm 143:10
- Romans 12:1-2
- Ephesians 5:15-17
- Ephesians 5:18-6:9
- 1 Thessalonians 4:3
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Paul's example of praying regularly for others is inspiring. Join in praying for others more regularly through the monthly "Eastbrook Prays" guide, or joining our morning prayer gatherings each weekday (Mon-Fri), 6-6:45 am, in Holy Grounds.