**Series Title: The Priority of Jesus Christ: Prioritizing Christ in Every Area of Life**

**Sermon Title: The Priority of Christ in Prayer, Part 1**

**Sermon Text: Colossians 1:9-14**

**Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to recognize the importance of prayer, in the knowledge of the will of God.**

**Sermon Proposition: There are 3 aspects related to the priority of prayer in Christ.**

**I. The 1st aspect of the prayer is the winsome witness. V.9a**

**II. The 2nd aspect of the prayer is the wonderful will. V.9b**

**III. The 3rd aspect of the prayer is the worthy walk. V.10**

1. Petition (**vv. 9-11**)

 2. Praise (**vv.12-14**)

**I. The 1st aspect of the prayer is the winsome witness. V.9a**

The opening phrase “for this reason” reflects back to Epaphras’s good witness about the Colossian believer’s faith in and faithfulness to Christ.

 Even without the benefit of social media, cell phones or other technology, every Christian can minister directly to the physical, mental, and spiritual well-being of other believers, without ever seeing them or speaking to them.

 We can all play a major role in each other’s spiritual health and growth through the means of prayer. What is to be the Pastor’s ministry of prayer that he models for the church, to practice among themselves. (**1 Timothy 2:1-8; Ephesians 1:15-23**)

 **Acts 6:4** "but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

 **2 Corinthians 1:11** you also helping together in prayer for us, that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the gift *granted* to us through many.

 **Philippians 1:19** For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

 **Ephesians 6:18** praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—

 “The enemy may reserve his strongest opposition for those who have the most potential for expanding God’s causes in the world.” [**John MacArthur Commentary Colossians & Philemon, p.27**]

**II. The 2nd aspect of the prayer is the wonderful will. V.9b**

 The word filled [the passive verb indicates God as the causal agent] conveys the sense of “completeness” in Colossians (**vv. 9, 19, 25; 2:9-10; 4:17**). Pleroo (filled) means to be completely filled or totally controlled by. Totally under the control of what fills you.

 A. The call to be **filled** with knowledge of His will.

 Epignosis (knowledge). The call is to be filled with a deep knowledge, based on the revealed Word of God. The Bible views knowledge of doctrinal absolutes as foundational to godly living. (**Colossians 2:3; 3:10**)

 **1 Corinthians 1:5** that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge,

 (**Colossians 3:16-17**)

 Godly living and thinking is directly linked in Scripture to knowledge of doctrinal truth. Having knowledge of God’s Word dominating the mind is the key to righteous living. Question: How does a Christian obtain knowledge?

 a) First, knowledge must be desired.

 **John 7:17** "If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or *whether* I speak on My own *authority*.

 b) Second, Christians must depend on the Holy Spirit.

 **1 Corinthians 2:10-12** But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. **11** For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. **12** Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

 c) Third, Christians must study the Scriptures.

 **2 Timothy 3:16-17** All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, **17** that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

 1. in all wisdom – Sophia refers to the ability to collect and concisely organize principles from the Scripture and produce in life what they mean.

 2. in all spiritual understanding – Sunesis refers to application of those principles to everyday life.

 These 2 criteria both deal in the non-physical realm and have the Holy Spirit as their source. This progression will always lead to godly character and practice.

**III. The 3rd aspect of the prayer is the worthy walk. V.10**

 The purpose of Paul’s prayer was that the believers might “walk worthy of the Lord” so that all their conduct would please Him (Jesus Christ). Walk is used in the Bible to refer to one’s pattern of daily conduct. A mind controlled by biblical spiritual knowledge wisdom and understanding produces a life “worthy of the Lord.”

 **1 Thessalonians 2:12** that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

 **Ephesians 4:1** I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called,

 **Philippians 1:27** Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,

 **Galatians 2:20** "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 loved me and gave Himself for me.

 A. The worthy walk is focused on **fully** pleasing Christ. V.10a

 Christian behavior that pleases the Lord involves the performance of good work (**Ephesians 2:10**), continuous life transforming spiritual growth, depends on the power of God, resulting in endurance, patience, and joy; that leads to an expression of gratitude, praise, and thanksgiving.

 B. The worthy walk manifests the **fruit** of Jesus Christ. V.10b

 **John 15:8** "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. **Romans 7:4** Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another-- to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

 Question: What produces fruit in the Christian’s life?

 1. Union with Jesus Christ. (**John 15:4-5; Romans 6:1-4**)

 2. Wisdom of Jesus Christ. (**James 3:17**)

 3. Diligent effort on the Christian’s part. (**2 Peter 1:5-8; Philippians 2:12-13**)

 C. The worthy walk increases in the **knowledge** of God the Father. V.10c

 1. Growth/maturity (**1 Peter 2:2**)

 2. Enabling grace

 **2 Peter 3:18** but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* the glory both now and forever. Amen.

 3. Hunger for the Word

 **Psalm 119:97** MEM. Oh, how I love Your law! It *is* my meditation all the day.

 4. Obedience

 **1 John 2:3-5** Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. **4** He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. **5** But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.

 5. Enlarging faith (**2 Thessalonians 1:3**)

 6. Greater love (**Philippians 1:9**)

 D. The worthy walk is **strength** with all the might of the Spirit. v.11a

 Dunamoumenoi (strengthen) is a present participle, signifying continuous action. Believers are therefore continually to be being strengthened with strength, that is supplied to them. (**Acts 1:8**)

 **Ephesians 3:16-17** that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, **17** that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

 E. The worthy walk is reflected by perseverance. V.11b