



10/21/26

Do you ever think of the kind of prayer that honors God? Do you ever think of what prayer actually is? Prayer is simply conversation with God. Conversation that honors God includes sharing everything with Him... even the hard things. But ultimately, the motivation of prayer that honors God is to glorify Him and bear fruit for Him as He leads (John 15:8). When I realize that, it changes the way I talk with God. Instead of trying to get Him to be all about pleasing me, I learn to humble myself before Him and trust that pleasing Him is the most pleasing place to be. That's a huge growing experience for me. But I know the training process is worth it.

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Colossians 1:3-14

I don't think there's one letter Paul wrote that doesn't include prayer. His humble dependence on the Lord was found throughout all his letters, and his mention of conversation with God was never absent. In this passage to the Colossian Kingdom Outpost, Paul was very detailed about his prayer for these believers. Let this be my prayer for our Kingdom Outpost... and for my individual walk with the Lord.

Vs. 3-5a ~ "We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven."

Paul almost always started his prayer with what he was thankful for. Here, he was thankful to the Lord for their faith in Jesus and their love for all the saints (believers). Why thank God for their faith and love? Shouldn't he thank THEM? No... Paul understood the motivation for faith and love... and that it doesn't come from our own hearts. It comes from our HOPE. Hope of what? Hope of heaven. From who (whom)? From the Lord.

My faith and love grow when my heart is not stuck in the treasures of earth but in the hope of heaven, eternal life with Jesus. When my hope is in my circumstances I begin to doubt and I

focus on self-love rather than loving others. Self-love is self-sabotage. It's not that I should hate myself. It's that I can't come first in priority. It's more important that I'm secure in God's love than that I'm focused on loving myself. His love is greater and more powerful than any love that could come from me.

Vs. 5b-8 ~ Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf and has made known to us your love in the Spirit.”

Of this you have heard... of what you have heard? Of this hope of heaven. Where did you hear it? In the word of truth, the gospel. The gospel is all encompassing. It teaches us the truth... the reality... that Jesus came from heaven, fully God and fully man, and gave His life for our sins. He took the punishment we deserve in order to set us free, not only from the judgment of sin, but the evil impact of sin on our lives. He rose from the dead and is seated in heaven at the right hand of the Father, preparing a place for us so that we can spend eternity with Him. If we don't have the hope of heaven, freedom from our sins means very little. But praise God, the gospel is all encompassing.

This gospel is God's grace lavished on us. Understanding the grace of God changes everything. It deepens our faith and it deepens our love so that it's not just man's love, but it's the love of the Spirit poured into our hearts.

I think it's cool that Paul mentioned Epaphras as the one who shared the gospel with this Kingdom Outpost. Paul had never met them face to face, but he heard of the faithful witness of Epaphras and how they embraced the gospel through his ministry. It's cool to me because Epaphras is not a household name. But God saw Him and God blessed him with the privilege of sharing the gospel. Even if my name is never known throughout Peoria let alone throughout Illinois or the United States or beyond... the Lord sees me and blesses me for my faithfulness wherever He uses me. O Lord, I pray that pleasing You and honoring the work You have for me to do will be the only "dream" I will ever seek to accomplish.

Vs. 9-12 ~ "And 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, 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; being strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.”

And now I get to see specifically what Paul prayed for. He was very detailed. He prayed without ceasing...

That they would be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding... Everything flows out from here... It starts with KNOWING Him, being filled

with knowledge of God and what He wants. That means that I have to recognize Him as having all authority. What He wants matters. What He wants is more important than what I want. O Lord, I want to want to obey You. And I definitely can't do this without Your help... so I pray. I pray for spiritual wisdom... the wisdom from above that James 3:17 says "is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere." Spiritual wisdom is WAY different than the wisdom of the world! I also need Your understanding that goes beyond what I can comprehend. This is why the Holy Spirit working in my life so imperative. I need to cooperate with You in faith and obedience, but You change my heart.

Everything from here in Paul's prayer starts with knowing God. If I pick it up as a to do list, I will totally miss that this is PRAYER... needing God's help to accomplish it. But with prayer and the help of God teaching me more and more of who He is, this is what flows from that knowledge...

I will learn what it means to walk worthy of the Lord. One question I can ask is, "Lord, does this please You?" If it's not coming from a heart of faith, love, and hope in Him, it's not worthy or pleasing. O Lord, please help me to lay down anything that doesn't please You as You reveal it to me.

Well, what's fully pleasing to God?

- Bearing fruit in every good work. Who defines what's good? The Lord? How do I bear fruit for Him? John 15 tells me that I start by abiding in Him and letting His word abide in me.*
- Increasing in the knowledge of God... I will never "arrive" at knowing God fully. He's infinite. There's always more to learn. It pleases Him for me to know Him more and more... because He loves being in a relationship with me. How cool is that!*
- He strengthens me with all power according to HIS glorious might... not the power of the angels or of man or anyone other than His own infinite power... for all endurance and patience with joy.*

Ummm... pause here. Endurance and patience with joy? Do I want that? Don't I just want Him to hand everything to me on a silver platter and make my life easy and comfortable? Why do I need endurance and patience WITH JOY? Is that possible to have? Only if I'm knowing the Lord more and more. He shows me the beauty of endurance and the love of patience... how it brought Him great joy to endure the cross for me, and to be so patient with me as I mess up constantly in trying to honor Him. I can have this kind of joy even when patience and endurance are needed because the Holy Spirit strengthens me in it. He never leaves me to face it alone!

Back to ways to please God...

- *Give thanks to the Father. Why? Because He's qualified me to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. That's my hope. He's qualified me, not just to be set free from sin, but to spend eternity with Him in heaven.*

These are some pretty great reasons to want to please God... He helps me bear meaningful and lasting fruit. I get to know Him. He strengthens me to have joy regardless of my circumstances. I'm going to spend eternity with Him, not because of what I've done but because of what Jesus has done for me. And even more...

Vs. 13-14 ~ "He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

I WAS in the domain of darkness... the kingdom of the evil one who only wanted to destroy my soul. I could not deliver myself from his trap or escape his snare. But GOD Himself delivered me. He didn't just deliver me. He didn't leave me in nowhere land. He transferred me to the Kingdom of His sweet Son, Jesus Christ. In HIS kingdom, I have redemption and forgiveness. Nothing about His purpose for me includes condemnation or punishment.

This is why I pray for the Spirit to help me to know and please Jesus. Everything He has for me is pleasing! Even the hard things bring joy when I depend on Him. O Lord, it starts with knowing You. To know You is to love You, to obey You, to please You. Please help me know You more.