

## Praying for Christ's Church & YOU!

January 15, 2017

Oakbrook Community Church (PCA)

Colossians 1:9-14

Pastor Mark W. Turner

### Paul's Prayer for Spiritual Maturity

- Filled with the Knowledge of His Will
  - spiritual wisdom - knowing God's moral will to make wise decisions
  - spiritual understanding - same understanding of things as God

### The Result of Spiritual Maturity - Please God

1. We please the Lord when we bear fruit in every good work 10
  - God saves us to bear fruit: Mt 7:17; 13:23;
  - Fruit comes as we abide in Christ Jn 15:2-5
  - Fruit comes as we live with Spirit power Gal 5:22-23; Eph 2:10
2. We please the Lord when we increase in the knowledge of God 9,10
  - We must get to know God Himself – never ending as God is infinite
  - knowledge of God = knowledge of His will (found in Word) John 14:21
3. We please the Lord when we are strengthened with God's power & stand steadfast in trials 11
  - God gives us His power to show forth His glory not like Christ: Jn 1:14; transfiguration Mt 17; miracles Jn 11; speaking Jn 18:6
  - But so we might have endurance & patience with joy! Paul 2 Cor 12:8-10
4. We please the Lord when we joyfully give thanks for our salvation 12
  - What else can compare to the great salvation we have received – our lives must exude joyful thanks – what about yours?

### 7 Characteristics of an Alive Church

1. Compelling Faith 4a
  - Word (Rm 10:17); Faith in Christ alone 1:4
2. Compassionate Love 4b
  - For all saints (Jms 2:1ff); Love is our test (Jn 13:34)
3. Confident Hope 5
  - Hope in God's work on our behalf & through us, not self-effort
4. Changed Lives 6
  - by 'the grace of God in truth' which changes lives that bear fruit
5. Committed Leaders 7,8
  - Epaphras was a servant and faithful leader of Christ
6. Constant Prayer & Thanksgiving 9-11
  - Prayer understands the necessity of God's work & results in thanks
7. Comprehended Forgiveness 12
  - Our power comes from our redemption in Christ, the forgiveness of sins.
  - This results in a people who forgive others Col 3:13

### Discuss & Apply:

- Describe what Spiritual Maturity looks like based upon Paul's prayer.
- How are we doing at producing Spiritually Mature believers at Oakbrook?
- How would you help a struggling believer who said, "how can I walk worthy of the Lord when I feel SO UNWORTHY?"
- Are we being hypocritical if we don't feel like pleasing God and we obey anyhow? What should we do if we don't feel like pleasing God?
- Discuss the 4 ways Paul prayed for believers to please God by: 1) look up scriptures; 2) ask how do we avoid this? 3) how can we improve upon this area? 4) how can we encourage others?
- Do you agree with the pastor's "7 Characteristics of an Alive Church" that Paul prayed for in the opening of this letter? What would you change?
- What area are we strongest in? What area are we weakest in? How can we as a church improve in any of these areas? How can YOU specifically help improve in one or more areas?
- Spiritual Growth often seems to be slow, taking a life-time. Is that okay? Is there any way to speed that up? How? What does that mean for the life of the church?

Study & Prepare: The Colossians were young believers, but Paul expects them to hear or read his letter and then put it into practice. Get an audio copy MP3 copy of Colossians (Google it or visit [www.bible.is](http://www.bible.is) and download the app or listen) and listen to this book. Read it several times (it is only 4 chapters!).