

anger suddenly; joyfulness is that attitude which is to characterize every happy Christian!

Conclusion

What a prayer! This thought keeps coming to one's mind. Would you pray it for yourself? For others? Does it show some insight into the real purpose for our salvation from sin, self, and this ugly world? We believe it does! How much does this prayer really mean to you.

THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS

"Items for Prayer"

Col. 1:9-11

Introduction

1. Paul was a great man of prayer. This is a rarity in our day. God gives us more men and women who are burdened with prayer before God!

2. The apostle had not seen the Colossians face to face, yet he prayed for them. What a prayer came from his heart to God for these people! Its dominant note is the "will of God." Note what he writes about this in our text:-

- a. Its quantity: filling. Paul prayed that they might be soaked in the will of God. What a prayer!
- b. Its content: knowledge. The Greek word means "full knowledge." It goes beyond that of the Gnostics.
- c. Its operation: wisdom and spiritual understanding. Wisdom is knowledge applied; understanding is the application of that knowledge to specific circumstances.

3. Now, out of such an experience of the "will of God," Paul prays for a "walk" consistent with this penetration of the design of God. It is described in four directions:-

1. PLEASING WALK. v. 10.

A more adequate rendering of the verse reads:
"that you may lead your lives worthy of the Lord (that's conduct) to His full satisfaction (that's commitment)."

- a. Conduct. This must be worthy of the Lord. Here is a high standard of morals and values. The world has its standard and we are constantly in conflict with it. The will of God in the life will be seen in proper conduct.
- b. Commitment. No conduct will please all! It's just not possible. But the walk worthy of Him will be satisfying to HIM. The Greek phrase used here notes a slave in full subservience to his master. He even anticipates the most trivial wish of the one who owns him. Now that's real commitment!

2. FRUITFUL WALK. v. 10.

- a. Perennial. The present tense of the verb "being fruitful" suggests this. No hit and miss fruitbearing or off season crop failures!
- b. Productive. The living branch is expected to bear fruit. If there is no fruit, one may genuinely question the place of God's will in the life.
- c. Perspective. "Every good work" is an interesting item. It gives a wide area of operation for the believer, BUT it also limits him. Many are the works which are good (singular "every notes this), however, there are some "works" which are not conducive to fruitbearing! The believer in whom the "will of God" has a central place will be sensitive to "work" he's in so as to be fruitful. Are there then questionable opportunities for employment? We believe there are!

3. DEVOTIONAL WALK. v. 10.

- a. Progressive. Paul did not feel that the

status quo was right. The present tense of the verb "increasing" make it very emphatic that Paul prayed for spiritual growth! We should be going someplace in our Christian experience. If we're not, why aren't we?

- b. Provision. The grammar of this phrase is better taken to note "instrument" rather than "sphere". It is "by" the knowledge of God that progress is made. If ever there were a verse which would prompt one to read good books, memorize the Word, and make one want to delve into the Book--this is it! Are we not touching here on the truth of Luke 10:38-42? Martha is not obsolete, BUT Mary's choice is NOT TO BE NEGLECTED! Alas, it has too often been that way!

4. EMPOWERED WALK. v. 11.

God never asks a type of life without providing the dynamic to live it. Whenever one seeks to go on with the Lord, he may be assured that devilish attacks will be his experience. Only divine power can thwart the attacks. Study this text:-

- a. Sort of God's power. "All might" is the word of the text. The noun is cognate with the verb. From this word, the English term "dynamite" is derived.
- b. Source of God's power. The standard for God's panoply is "His glorious power." This word "power" means God's manifested power whereas the word "might" above means natural ability which is inherent.
- c. Purpose of God's power. What a triad of words is introduced here: patience which is really forbearance; longsuffering which is the spirit which does not blaze up in