

# **Journey Through the New Testament**

## **Philippians 1 – Colossians 1**

### ***Series: An Apostle's Epistles***

### ***The Message to the Philippians***

**9-8-19**

#### ***Introduction***

The letters of Paul (and letters presumed to be from Paul) begin with a greeting, a note of thanksgiving and a prayer for the church(es) he is writing to. Paul's prayers for the early believers were specific to their needs and circumstances. Examining the prayers of Paul can guide our praying for the church and for ourselves. Paul found great joy and contentment in serving Christ and desired for the Philippian and Colossian believers to also experience joy through a Christ-centered life.

#### ***Opening Discussion***

1. Have you ever had someone say to you, "You're in my prayers?" How does that make you feel?
2. Why is it important for people to know we are praying for them?
3. Why is it important to pray for the church as well as individuals?

#### ***Prayer***

O God, we confess that most of our praying is about what we want rather than what you desire to give us. Help us to seek your will rather than our own. We pray that we would "grow in the knowledge of God; being strengthened by his might..." (Col 1:11) In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

#### ***Bible Study Philippians 1:9-11 (CEB)***

##### ***What?***

1. What qualities did Paul pray for the Philippians to develop?
2. Imagine a church where there is "knowledge and all kinds of insight... and the fruit of righteousness..."  
How might our congregation be different if this was our sincere and constant prayer?
3. How would we be different as individuals?

#### ***Read Colossians 1:9-14***

1. What is Paul praying for God to do for the Colossians?

2. How would the Colossians be encouraged by knowing that Paul had never stopped praying for them?
3. Do you know of instances when people have prayed for years in regard to a situation? What inspires them to continue?
4. Paul prayed that the Colossians would be “filled with the knowledge of God’s will...” Have you ever prayed for God to show you his will? Discuss ways that God reveals his will.
5. How can we get confused when seeking “God’s will?”

### ***So What?***

1. Paul’s prayers help us understand what God desires—the qualities in our lives that are “worthy of the Lord and pleasing to him” (v. 10) In what way is this passage showing us “God’s will” for our lives and things for our “prayer list?” –things like knowledge, obedience and spiritual power.
2. What is the connection between prayer and spiritual growth?

### ***Lesson Notes:***

As believers, we are to live out the pattern of Christ’s self-giving love in trusting obedience to God (Phil 2:5-11)—by serving each other and participating together in the work of the gospel. Through prayer and joining together in the community of faith, we grow stronger and deeper in our life in Christ.

### ***Now What?***

1. What steps could you take that would help you be more intentional and specific in praying for yourself, for others and for the church?

***Closing*** Invite the class to reflect in silence as someone reads the elements of Paul’s prayers listed below.

*May you have more and more love and knowledge of God, depth of insight, discernment, purity, innocence, righteousness, the knowledge of God’s will, spiritual wisdom and understanding, great endurance and patience.*