

A BELIEVER'S PRAYER

Colossians 1:9–12

⁹ For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; ¹⁰ that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹ strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; ¹² giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

—Colossians 1:9–12

Read Colossians 1:9–12

How little we grasp of the overwhelmingly great goodness, grace, and generosity of God! At times, we tend to linger in an attitude of condemnation, ingratitude, or spiritual paralysis, all because we fail to realize how good God is and how good His intentions are for our lives. It is no wonder that Paul, as he sought to communicate to the believers in Colossae the goodness of God and all He had done for them through Jesus, began his letter with a prayer for these believers. It was not enough for the apostle to give these believers the great facts about God's goodness, it had to be divinely imparted to them by the Spirit of God. The Spirit needed to prepare their hearts for the great news. Prayer is the means by which the Holy Spirit is able to prepare our hearts to receive, understand, and implant the truth of God into our hearts. Therefore, Paul prayed that these believers would be *filled with the knowledge of [God's] will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.*

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Wisdom is the practical outworking of knowledge (James 3:17), and that knowledge cannot be separated from the spiritual understanding that comes through the discernment given by the Holy Spirit.⁷

God is so good, and He desires to work in extraordinary and wonderful ways in our lives. In order to allow God to work, we must receive, understand, and truly implant the truth about His goodness deep into our hearts. This is accomplished through the collaboration of God's Spirit with God's truth. As these great truths take root in our hearts, we begin to see God working in our lives, in the world, and we also become participants with God in bringing others into the realization of His goodness. Even as Paul felt that it was expedient to pray for the Colossians before he began to unveil to them the greatness of God's goodness toward them, it is expedient for us to pray for one another that we all might grasp together the great goodness of who our God is, what He has done, and all the great things He has planned!

As you meditate on Paul's prayer this week, may you be filled with the knowledge of His will so that you may be able to grasp and know the effect of God's great goodness.

1. In Colossians 1:9, when Paul writes *for this reason*, he is referring to Epaphras' testimony about the Colossians' *love in the Spirit* (verse 8). How did Paul respond to this news about the Colossians?

2. Comment on the following excerpts from Paul's prayer in Colossians 1:9–12:
 - a. *Filled with the knowledge of His will*

 - b. *In all wisdom and spiritual understanding*

- c. *Walk worthy of the Lord*
- d. *Fully pleasing Him*
- e. *Fruitful in every good work*
- f. *Increasing in the knowledge of God*
- g. *Strengthened with all might*
- h. *For all patience and longsuffering with joy*

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We must never think that patience is complacency. Patience is endurance in action. It is not the Christian sitting in a rocking chair, waiting for God to do something. It is the soldier on the battlefield, keeping on when the going is tough. It is the runner on the race track, refusing to stop because he wants to win the race (Heb. 12:1).¹⁰

—Warren Wiersbe

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Walk in a manner worthy of the Lord. Paul wanted the Colossians to live in a manner that adequately reflected what God had done for them and was doing in them. Being “worthy of God” is a phrase that occurs in ancient pagan inscriptions throughout Asia. It pictures someone’s life being weighed on scales to determine its worth.⁸

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Spiritual power was a key issue in the Greco-Roman world. People sought power through connection with various gods and pagan rituals in order to protect them from evil spirits and to help them acquire wealth or influence. Paul wants the Colossians to know that he prays regularly that God would impart His power to them, not for selfish aims but so that they can live for God in a worthy manner.⁹

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Believers can never be qualified on their own; instead, God must make them sufficient through Jesus Christ. The tense of the verb points to “qualifying” as an act in the past rather than a process.¹¹

i. *Giving thanks to the Father*

j. *Qualified us to be partakers*

k. *Inheritance of the saints in the light*

1) Which of these requests do you need most right now?

2) Which of these requests do you need to pray for someone you know?

3. What is your greatest takeaway from Colossians 1:9–12?