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# A Prayer for the Church

## Colossians 1:9-11

9 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, 10 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; 11 being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy;

We know that prayer is the most important thing we can do, yet we struggle with how to pray and what to pray. Paul gives us an example in Colossians 1 of how to pray for others. Paul begins his prayer for the Colossians with thanksgiving, and out of that flows his requests.

- I. **Paul first prays that the Colossians would be filled with the knowledge of His will.** Although we consider the knowledge of God's will to be focused on the details of our lives such as "Who will I marry?" or "Should I take this job?", the knowledge of God's will is focused on the bigger picture and has already been revealed to us. To know the will of God involves the knowing of the Word of God (spiritual wisdom) and applying spiritual truths (understanding).
- II. **The purpose of our spiritual wisdom and understanding is to live a life that pleases Christ.** Paul prays that their lives would please Christ and would be evidenced by the bearing of fruit and increasing in the knowledge of God. Eyes focused on Christ rather than other believers will lead to living a life worthy of Christ.
- III. Paul encourages the Colossians that they can know God's will and bear much fruit as they are **continually strengthened according to God's power.** The same power that strengthened and sustained Jesus from the Garden of Gethsemane to the cross and to the resurrection is the same power that can strengthen us to respond with the patience of Christ in our relationships with others.

## Discussion Questions

1. In what ways is spiritual wisdom different than worldly wisdom?
2. How can we obtain spiritual wisdom?
3. What is God's will? (vv. 9-10)
4. How can we know that we are living lives that please Christ? What is the evidence of that?
5. What is the difference between being strengthened FROM God's power and being strengthened ACCORDING to God's power?

### **Going Deeper**

1. How can Paul's example of prayer for the Colossians change the way you pray for people?
2. Why do you think we jump right to the application (understanding) without spending the time gaining spiritual wisdom?
3. Are you living a life pleasing to Christ? Are you bearing fruit in every good work?