

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Notes

Sermon Notes for March 29-30, 2003

Gerry Andersen

"The Prayer of Paul"

Colossians 1:1-12

1. We should pray with thanksgiving (1:1-8)

We should be thankful for spiritual blessings in the lives of others, not just physical blessings in our own life.

Thanksgiving can be for people we only hear about.

Paul was thankful for their faith in Christ, their love for each other and their hope for the future (1:4-5). These are grouped in the Scripture (1 Corinthians 13:13; 1 Thessalonians 1:3; 5:8). Faith produces love and hope. Those without love or hope demonstrate they have no faith.

The gospel is described as the word of truth and spreading throughout the world. It impacts our life and our world, both internally within us and externally around us.

"Bearing fruit" (KARPOPHOROU MENON) and "increasing" (AUXANOMENON) are in the middle voice, meaning the gospel is bearing fruit and increasing, in and of itself. The implication is that God's word of truth bears fruit and increases with or without us.

For us to participate in the gospel we must:

- Hear of the grace of God in truth (Romans 10:17)
- Understand the grace of God in truth

"Understood" (EPEGNOOTE) is not so much a developed knowledge of truth but a conscious recognition about the truth. You can be convinced of the truthfulness of something without being very knowledgeable about it.

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Our thankfulness will increase as we work together with fellow bond-servants who are faithful servants of Christ.

2. We should pray for spiritual growth (1:9-12)

We should pray for spiritual growth in the lives of others, not just physical gain in our own life.

a. The cycle of spiritual growth (1:9-10)

By continuing this cycle, we keep our forward momentum for spiritual growth.

b. The capability for spiritual growth (1:11-12)

We can be strengthened toward growth because of God's power, not because of our ability.

God not only empowers us to grow but to patiently endure.

Acknowledging God's grace in our sanctification and in our eternal destiny will move us toward joyful thanksgiving.

The prayer of Paul is a model to follow, not a script to recite (Matthew 6:7).

What you are praying for is what you are living for.