



Morningside Church

Sermon Discussion Guide

Title: Praying Proactively

Date: April 14, 2024

Scripture Text: Colossians 1:9-12

Notes:

We continue our study of the book of Colossians with a focus on praying proactively. Many times, we are motivated to pray as we react to our circumstances: failing health, falling family, or fleeing finances for example. Prayer is absolutely needed in these situations. But how often do we pray proactively, in anticipation for what God might do to develop you to be more like Him. In today's passage we see Paul's example as we look at four ways he prayed.

I. To Know the Will of God (Col. 1:9)

Paul had been given a good report (in the prior verses) of the Colossian Christians faith in Christ. "For this reason" he continually prays for them; wanting them to be filled with the knowledge of God's will. To be "*filled*" means completeness, to be controlled by or motivated by God's will. It is passive, meaning it is God who does the filling. There are two means by which we can know God's will: the *Word* of God ([Rom. 12:1-2](#)) and the *Spirit* of God ([Eph. 5:17-18](#)).

- What does [Rom. 12:1-2](#) say about how we can know the will of God?
- How do we transform our minds?
- How often do you sit and read God's word? Daily? Weekly? Occasionally?
- What do you need to do to be able to spend time in His word on a daily basis?
- Looking at [Eph. 5:17-18](#), what is being filled with the Holy Spirit compared to?
- What does it look like to be drunk (controlled) by the Holy Spirit?
- How does that help know God's will?
- On a scale of 1-5, how controlled are you by the Holy Spirit?
 - What can you do to increase that number?

II. To Be Faithful in the Walk with God (Col. 1:10a)

Being filled with the knowledge of God's will helps us walk in a manner worthy of Him which pleases Him. It is a good thing to please God!! One of the greatest threats to Christianity is the compromising Christian. One who claims they are a Christian, but their life is not consistent with the Bible. Leveraging our knowledge of God's will equips us to live obediently and effectively for Christ.



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- Describe characteristics of a compromising Christian.
- Describe someone you know that walks in a manner worthy of the Lord and pleases Him.
- What about their character and commitment stands out to you?
- How would you describe your walk, are you more of a committed Christian or compromising Christian?
- How can you be more of a committed Christian?

III. To Be Fruitful in the Work of God ([Col. 1:10b-11](#))

To walk in a manner worthy of the Lord is to bear fruit ([John 15:8](#)). And by bearing fruit, we come to know God more. To know God is more than head knowledge but expresses an increasing intimacy with Him.

- [Gal. 5:22-23](#) describe the fruit of the Spirit, how can we as Christians bear this fruit?
- What are other examples of fruit bearing?
- Why should we bear fruit?
- Can we sometimes be motivated by the approval of others more than God?
 - What does that look like?
- How can we stay focused on bearing fruit for God, seeking only to please Him?

IV. To Be Thankful for God's Ways ([Col. 1:12](#))

As we understand God's will, which enables us to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord and as a result bearing fruit for Him, we have opportunity to be thankful for the process of maturing He is bringing us through. We always have something to be thankful for! But in this context, God is helping us know, understand, and be more like Him. This only happens when we have accepted Christ's redemptive work on the cross. We are then able to share in the inheritance of the saints.

- List three things you are thankful for today.
- Why is it important to recognize how thankful we should be to God?
- How can a worthy walk encourage a thankful heart?
- How can bearing fruit encourage a thankful heart?
- How can your thankfulness to God be an encouragement to others?

This was Paul's proactive prayer for the Colossian Christians. Are you praying proactively?