

Col 1:9-10 PRAYER on BEHALF of NEW CONVERTS

PRELIMS. This passage is about **prayer** for **new** believers. As soon as Paul heard of the Colossians' conversion, he began praying for them – and had not stopped! The Book goes on to teach about the **true** Christ as distinct from the false 'Christs' that they were hearing about at that time. There were teachings on **philosophy** going on at that time which needed addressing! But first Paul here mentions his earnest **prayer** for them. It is **instructive** to learn how Paul prayed for young believers.

First, Paul **thanks** God for them. "*We always **thank** God... when we pray for you*" [3] Every time he prayed for them he **always** gave thanks to God! Paul was not only **happy** about their salvation, but he made sure God, the "*author and finisher*" of their salvation, was **thanked**! Paul had never met these Xns, and yet he is **excited** about them and feels **obligated** to mention them, perhaps each by name, in prayer! **APP** How about your prayers every time you pray for Dens Road Church?

REASONS for PRAYER

*"...from the day we heard, we have **not ceased** to pray for you"*
Here is something **important**! It is more important that you pray for **Xns** than for anyone else! There are special **promises** made to Xns! The only promise God gives for unbelievers is eternal death - unless they repent! You do **not** find Paul praying for unbelievers – do you? Do you find anyone in Bible praying for unbelievers. Neither do you read of prayer for 'the salvation of a whole city, or for the whole congregation to be saved'? We pray for God's people. Jesus "*I am praying for **them**, I am **not** praying for the **world** but for **those** whom You have given Me*" [J17:9]! True, "*prayers must be made for all (classes of) men*", it is so that "**we** (Xns) *may lead a quiet and peaceable life*" [1 Tim 2:1] under the persecutions of Nero, etc!

We pray for **covenant** people and covenant children – because

all the promises of God are made to covenant people! They are not made to the world. That is why it is so **important** to be **baptised!** Baptism **joins** you to the covenant people, it makes you a **member** of the Church. You can **expect** blessings, and earnestly pray with the **hope** of a positive answer for covenant people for God has promised to bless His covenant people – one way or the other. (Remember **Ishmael** was blessed too – but **only materially** – because he **rejected** the covenant). God's **elect** are among His covenant people. God sends His saving sanctifying Spirit on the covenant people, not on the world!

Xns **need** to be prayed for! Because as soon as a person is 'born again' **Satan** sends an **email** to all his 'agents', " 'so & so' must now be a **target**. We must hustle, trouble, annoy, **confuse**, disappoint him"! New Xns need to be specially "**watchful**", as Peter says, because they have a **new** enemy - "*your adversary the devil, prowls around...seeking*"[1Pet 5:8]!

Also Xians need to be prayed for because 'conversion' does **not mean perfection** – and God would have us as near perfect as possible. Some think that once you are converted, you have arrived, you are **able to resist evil**, know all things, have answers to all questions, etc! Not at all! Eg they are **not filled** with either all knowledge, or all wisdom, or have all **ability to walk** worthy! That's **why** Paul starts to pray for **these very things** – because they do **not** have them, but there is the **possibility** that they will, because God **promised** all good things for His people and encourages them to **pray** for such things! *There are **some** things that God has **appointed** for us which we will **only** get through **prayer!** He has **ordained** that we obtain **by prayer!** Thus Paul "*from the day we heard*" it, do **not ceased** "*to pray for you*"!

TRUE KNOWLEDGE v. FALSE KNOWLEDGE

Paul prays that they would be "*filled with the knowledge of His will*"! So they were **not** filled at **regeneration!** The West. Con.

Faith does **not** come automatically into the mind at regeneration! There needs to be **instruction** in truths and right living.

The **knowledge**? *It is **not** the **gnostic heretical type** that offers ‘salvation thru spiritual **knowledge**’ and enables one to escape the material world so that we can realise and find our true spiritual destiny! In New Age belief – the **terminology** sounds good! Prayer; God, Healings, the Christ; born again = re-incarnation!) We heard ‘interview’ of a musician going to the hills and being alone, and entering into a mood/trance=‘my church’ and she **felt** spiritual and was psychologically lifted up! We are in a spiritual ‘age’! People talk of ‘**destiny**’ as God’s will for them. *Neither is it an **experience** of exclusive sects thru manipulation of our thinking mechanisms! *Neither is it even a theological knowledge as taught in Theolog Seminaries!

APP You **can** have **all** that and more, and yet be **ignorant** of true and saving knowledge, the knowledge of God **in Christ**! It is vital the **Cross of Christ** is **central** in our spiritual life!

It is “*the knowledge of His will*”![9b]. Of God, our Creator, our Maker, our Lawgiver! God is **so different** in His **thinking** from us. “*My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither My ways, your ways says the Lord*”[Isa 55:8] “*You thought that I was like yourself and did approve your sin*” [Met Psa 50]

BEING FILLED with GOD’S WILL?

In order to be filled there needs to be 1st an **emptying**! Because our minds are full of rubbish! You can’t fill a sack if its full already! Our minds are **finite**! Our minds **are full** of error – over the **decades** “*the elementary spirits of the world*” have corrupted our minds! Thus: “*See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit*”[2:8]! *That’s **why** its **easier** to convert **children** – there is nothing in their minds at birth, they have no knowledge – so start filling it with **truths**!

We need to empty our minds of **self-will**! Our own carnal ideas

and our own corrupt understandings. **APP** Our prayers are petitions of, not *“Thy will be done”* but **“Thy will be changed”!** We try to **persuade** God to do **our** will – we struggle to exercise more faith in trying to change God’s mind as it were! We pray **pretending** to find out God’s will about some purchase, **ignoring** what God has **already** said about **covetousness**, or getting into **debt!** Finding out God’s will for us is *“fully pleasing Him”*[10] A Godly man is a man who **sacrifices** his **own** will and does God’s!

Being filled with the knowledge of His will is **not** just **discovering** what it is – it is actually **doing** it! The **end result** must be *“walking in a manner worthy of the Lord”*[10]. Knowledge is important – because without it we will not know **what** to **do**. But our knowledge must result in **action!** *“be doers of the word and not hearers only”* for it is *“a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing”*[Jam1:22-25].

Note: *“in all spiritual **wisdom** and understanding”* wisdom is the **practical outworking** of knowledge. Wisdom is not simply knowing what’s right but **doing** what’s right! Spiritual understanding is **not** understanding spiritual things – it is having the mind of God, having a spiritual mind.

If we are filled with true knowledge then there will be **constant progress!** There is **inbuilt** into Godliness, the **principle** of growth! Notice the **tense** *“bearing fruit...and increasing”*[10] **Obedience** to God, will result in **‘automatic’** continual growth! God will give the increase **if** we **do** the sowing and the watering! *The more you **know** a person, the more you will **love** them. (You cannot love a person you do not know!). The more you love a person, the more you will **wish** to **please** that person! (Love is not self-seeking, but other-person pleasing).

Easier to live with and to deal with!