Jesus-Shaped Prayers July 3, 2022

*Colossians 1:1-14 Series: Jesus: Underestimated*

Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance … it is laying hold of his highest willingness. — Richard Trench

Intro: Everybody prays, but how?

1. Pray a gospel assessment
2. Faith: Who do they trust?

v. 3 *We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you …*

v. 4 *since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus*

v. 6 *you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth*

1. Love: How are they connecting?

v. 4 *and of the love that you have for all the saints*

v. 8 *[Epaphras] has made known to us your love in the Spirit*

1 John 3:14 *We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.*

1 Corinthians 13:13 *So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*

1. Hope: What’s the motivation?

v. 5 *because of the hope laid up for you in heaven*

v. 5 *you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel*

* How have your prayers changed since trusting in Jesus?
* Why is love for other believers essential evidence of true faith?
* Why is a person’s motivation so important to God?

1. Pray for knowledge in action
2. You can’t guess at God’s will

v. 9 *we have not ceased to pray for you*

v. 9 *asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding*

v. 10 *increasing in the knowledge of God*

Ephesians 5:17 *Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.*

Romans 12:2 *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

Proverbs 2:6 *For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding …*

1. Knowledge needs to be expressed in works

v. 10 *so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him*

v. 10 *bearing fruit in every good work*

John 15:5 *I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.*

John 15:16 *You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide*

* As long as you know the Sunday School stories and attend church, why do you need to read the Bible for yourself?
* What kind of things are included in the concept of fruit?
* How do some people acquire a lot of Bible knowledge without growing in maturity, godliness, or good works?

1. Pray for patient gratitude
2. Power to endure circumstances and be patient with others

v. 11 *being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy*

Acts 5:41 *Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name.*

2 Corinthians 8:2 *for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part.*

1. A Christian has received too much not to be grateful

v. 12 *giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light*

v. 13 *He has delivered us from the domain of darkness*

John 12:46 *I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.*

v. 13 *and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son*

v. 14 *in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins*

* Why are “endurance and patience with joy” so critical to a life that is pleasing to the Lord?
* In Acts 5:41, how could believers rejoice that they had to suffer?
* How can a Christian lose their sense of gratefulness to God?
* Which one of the prayers of this passage do you most need in your life?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study Colossians 1:15-23

Notes