A Prayer for Growth **2.15.09**

[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] May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, [12] giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. [13] He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, [14] in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Colossians 1:9-14 ESV

BIG IDEA: Paul is praying that they would grow spiritually. His requests should be our goals.

"And so, from the day we heard" From Epaphras, connected back to last week.
"we have not ceased to pray for you" Shows Paul's devotion. Gives us an example.

P: Our prayers should be consistent and persistent.
Could those words be used to describe our prayers? What can help you take the next step?

P: Our prayers should be varied—incl. for Spiritual Growth.
Do we ever pray like this or is it strictly 'need based'? Pray this for your Community Group, Spouse, Children, Kids you teach in little groups, etc.

"filled" Important word, lit. 'to the brim and overflowing'
"knowledge Imp. word. Deep, thorough knowledge and understanding.
"of his will" Primarily, what God has done in Christ. Possible individ. appl.
"in all spiritual wisdom and understanding" Unclear, but ultimately, same outcome.

P: We should seek to know God and His will as thoroughly as possible.
Is this desire at work in our hearts? Are we doing our part to see this happen?

"so as" Indicates purpose, what follows is what he is praying for.
"to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord" To live in a way that is consistent with who Jesus is what He has done for them.
"fully pleasing to him" Choosing what God wants in the every day life.

P: We should seek to live lives that are 'fully pleasing' to God.
What is in my life that I know is not pleasing to God? How do I need to address this?

"bearing fruit in every good work" Like Eph. 2:10. Serving God & others.

P: We should seek to 'bear fruit' in serving God and others.
Where should I be bearing more fruit? What is the next step I need to take in this direction?

"increasing in the knowledge of God." Growing the knowledge of who God is.

P: We should always seek to increase in the knowledge of God.
Am I taking advantage of all my opportunities to see this happen?

"May you be strengthened with all power" Spiritual power was important to them.
"according to his glorious might" Acc. to the 'might of his glory,' His attributes.
"for all endurance" Bear up under difficult circumstances.
"patience" Bear up with difficult people.
"with joy" To be joyful in the process, a truly unique Christian virtue.

P: Our spiritual strength should come from God—not ourselves.
Are we turning to God for strength or trying to pull ourselves up by our bootstraps?

P: Part of the fruit of our faith is endurance with difficult situations and patience with difficult people.
Do you see this at work in your life? In which area, do you most need to see the most growth?

"giving thanks to the Father" The source of all good things.

P: Another fruit of growing into our faith is gratitude.
P: God has given us so much to be thankful for in the Gospel.

"who has qualified you" lit. "to make fit, able"
"to share in the inheritance of the saints in light." OT language applied to them.
"He has delivered us from the domain of darkness" Picture of rescue.
"transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son" Reestablished in a new land.
"in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" Bought back, forgiven.

Works Consulted: *Expositor's Commentary, NIV Application Commentary, Life Application Bible, MacArthur Study Bible, ESV Study Bible, Messages by Steve Hart, Darrin Patrick*