

Pray For What?

"...we have not stopped praying for you.

We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way..."

Colossians 1:9-10 (NIV)

Yesterday I saw a wonderful friend that I had not seen for perhaps a year. It was good to chat with him for a few moments and catch up on things. He has suffered much in life and I am a spiritual mentor to him.

In an email to me following our brief meeting he told me he was praying for me. He noticed I was now using a cane to get around and he was concerned. I was much encouraged by his thoughtful action on my behalf. But what, I wondered, was he specifically asking the Lord to do in my life?

I trust that all of us as Christians pray for one another. The context of our verses for today give several suggestions for our prayers on behalf of each other. First, we should ask that God's will be made known to those we pray for.

Then Paul desired that

his readers live lives worthy of the Lord. Next he prayed they would please God in everything. Further he prayed they would be powerfully strengthened and have patience and endurance. Paul also asked that they might be joyful and thankful.

Is this the way you pray for yourself and others? Or are you tempted, as I am, to pray that God would relieve us of our burdens in life. Sadly I think that most people stop after praying that their loved ones might be blessed with good health and an easy life in this world.

Certainly we can and should pray for one another that we may live peaceful and comfortable lives in this world. **But** it is much more important that we get from God the things included in the prayers of Paul.

Ask yourself what occupies your attention when

you pray. As a person who has had some health issues through the years I certainly desire relief from the misery poor health brings. However, I have learned over the years that it is my character and my spiritual life that is really the most important part of my existence to be concerned about.

Look at some of Paul's prayers for his spiritual children (Philippians 1:3-11; Ephesians 1:15-23; Colossians 1:9-12; 2 Thesalonians 1:11-12) and, if necessary, change the focus of your prayers to have emphasis on the things he sought from God for himself and others. May the things that were most important to Paul in his prayers be the very things we pray for on behalf of ourselves and one another.

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