

Community Pentecostal Center's – 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting for Breakthrough

Week 2 – Our Focus is “Spiritual Hunger and Delight”

Day 8 – Monday, April 7th .. (2 Thessalonians 1:3) “We ought to thank God always for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, since your faith is flourishing and the love each one of you has for one another is increasing.”

Interestingly, Paul completely bypasses the things that most often drive Christian thanksgiving: material wealth, fortunate turn of events, or smooth sailing through some process.

Instead, Paul gives thanks for: 1) growing faith, and 2) increasing love. Why? Because Paul understands that what we give thanks for today is what our hearts will grow to treasure tomorrow. To put in a nutshell, our thanksgiving is formative. Want to treasure “stuff?” Then give thanks primarily for “stuff.”

Want to treasure the giver of grace? Then give thanks for the signs of grace, including where God has grown your faith and increased your love.

Day 9 – Tuesday, April 8th .. (2 Thessalonians 1:4 - 10) “Therefore, we ourselves boast about you among God’s churches — about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and afflictions that you are enduring. It is clear evidence of God’s righteous judgment that you will be counted worthy of God’s kingdom, for which you also are suffering, since it is just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you and to give relief to you who are afflicted, along with us. This will take place at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with his powerful angels, when he takes vengeance with flaming fire on those who don’t know God and on those who don’t obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will pay the penalty of eternal destruction from the Lord’s presence and from his glorious strength on that day when he comes to be glorified by his saints and to be marveled at by all those who have believed, because our testimony among you was believed.”

If in verse 3, Paul is occupied with giving thanks for unconventional things, then in verses 4 to 10, Paul is occupied with confidence in an unavoidable future. Can you hear his confidence? “You will be counted worthy.” “This will take place.” “They will pay the penalty.” And finally, not if Jesus comes, but “when Jesus comes”. Paul is so confident of the future that he’s bragging of the win before the game is even over! In your prayer today, declare what Paul is declaring. Two things: 1) God will give relief to the believers (v.7), and 2) God will punish evil (vv.6, 8). And just as thanksgiving forms our affection, so does declaration.

Day 10 – Wednesday, April 9th .. (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12) - “In view of this, we always pray for you that our God will make you worthy of his calling, and by his power fulfill your every desire to do good and your work produced by faith, so that the name of our Lord Jesus will be glorified by you, and you by him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

How could Paul pray this? These are incredible things that Paul is asking! Check them out: That you would live worthy of your calling - That Jesus would be glorified in you - That you would be glorified in Jesus. This kind of prayer only rolls off the tongue of someone who deeply treasures God. How did Paul get there? By thanksgiving and declaration. Verses 1 to 10 is how Paul got to verses 11 and 12! Just as our exercises form our fitness, so our thanksgiving and declaration form what we treasure. Paul begins the prayer with “In view of this.” In view of what? Thankfulness for the signs of grace (see Day 8) and confidence that God will put things right (see Day 9)! Pray the same three things that Paul prayed for in the bullet points above: that you would live worthy of your calling, that Jesus would be glorified in you, and that you would be glorified in Jesus! Amen!

Day 11 – Thursday, April 10th .. (1 Thessalonians 3:11-13) - “Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you. And may the Lord cause you to increase and overflow with love for one another and for everyone, just as we do for you. May He make your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints. Amen.”

Could it be that your lack of diligent prayers for CPC is one of the reasons that she hungers for spiritual things less than what she should? Look at the way Paul prays for the Thessalonians. It’s no surprise then that the Thessalonians were examples to all the surrounding churches (1:3, 7)! As you fast today, pray these things for CPC: - Increase and overflow with love for the church and for the lost - That God would make their hearts blameless in holiness. The above is what you should pray, but how should you pray? Verse 10 tells us that Paul prays very earnestly for the Thessalonians “night and day.” Copy him. And as you pray for the church, also pray that God will make way for you to go to them (digitally or physically) to encourage them with your love (2:17-20) and strengthen their faith (3:10).

Day 12 – Friday, April 11th .. (Philippians 1:9-11) - “And I pray this: that your love will keep on growing in knowledge and every kind of discernment, so that you may approve the things that are superior and may be pure and blameless in the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.”

Continuing where we left off yesterday, we will pray for our church the way Paul prayed for the Philippiian church. Paul prays for a love that grows, but not one that grows in cheap sentimentality or “niceness.” Rather, he prays for a love that grows in knowledge

and discernment. Why does Paul pray this? Because Paul understands that the human heart is engineered in such a way that it always chooses what it discerns to be best. But just as it is impossible to drive a car without gas, so it is impossible to rightly discern what is best (“things that are superior”) without the love of knowledge and discernment. To have this kind of love means that your church will have far more than the elementary ability to choose between right and wrong, but the advanced ability to choose between best (such as the things that will stir up their spiritual hunger) and good (such as a good education). Pray this today for as many members of CPC that you can think of.

Day 13 – Saturday, April 12th .. (Ephesians 3:16-19) - “I pray that he may grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power in your inner being through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. I pray that you, being rooted and firmly established in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the length and width, height and depth of God’s love, and to know Christ’s love that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”

What do you look for in a church? Great music? Insightful preaching? Relevant programs? Genuine relationships? Here’s a “spiritual” one: vibrant evangelism? Surprisingly, Paul mentions none of these. Instead, Paul wants a church with members who are “filled with all the fullness of God.” Not just partially filled, but all, from head to toe, filled. What do you want the Holy Spirit to do? Start a revival? Perform miracles? Speak audibly? The Spirit can and has done all these things. But in this passage, what Paul specifically asks for is that the Holy Spirit would enable us to be, in a never be, in a never-ending way, swamped by the love of Christ, not just privately by ourselves, but with “all the saints!” To put in a nutshell, what Paul looks for in a church is the filling of the Holy Spirit. Members who are swamped by the love of Christ. Today, get together with other church members (“all the saints”) and pray toward that end.

Day 14 – Sunday, April 13th .. (Colossians 1:9-12) - “For this reason also, since the day we heard this, we haven’t stopped praying for you. We are asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, so that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, so that you may have great endurance and patience, joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the saints’ inheritance in the light.”

Paul makes it clear in verses 4 and 9 that he has never met the Colossians (Paul’s only “heard” about their faith from word of mouth, but has never personally “seen” it). Yet he’s been praying for them! What did he pray? Colossians 1:9-12. And what happened as Paul prayed for these “strangers”? His heart burst into praises for Jesus (see 1:13-20). In other words, Paul’s experience of the deepest satisfaction, which resulted in Colossians 1:13-20, one of the greatest Christological texts in all of the Bible, was birthed not out of Paul praying for his personal needs and wants, but out of consistently praying for strangers (“we haven’t stopped praying for you”).

Beginning today, consistently pray for what Paul prayed for Christians in China, Egypt, the Middle East, or other parts of the world. Pray for knowledge - Pray that God would fill them with knowledge of His will - Pray that God would give them all wisdom and spiritual understanding - Pray for a worthy walk - Pray for fruit-bearing fruit in every good work - Pray for growth in the knowledge of God - Pray for empowerment by God's glorious might - Pray for endurance and patience with joy, regardless of circumstance.