

**Remnant Life Church**  
October 18, 2015  
**Colossians 1 – Part 2**  
**Colossians 1:3-4**

- *We continually give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah), as we are praying for you; For we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and your love for all of God's people, (Amplified version)*
- In these 2 verses are 3 ways that we can learn to better love the people in our lives

**Review - FIRST WAY-**

- Versus 3,4, and 5 in the original language (Greek) are one complete sentence
  - Paul didn't have to try and string together his thoughts; they were already connected
  - His entire thought process was one of *gratitude*
- Thanksgiving is the instinct of a life that is under the grace of God
- Gratitude is a great enemy of pride
  - To thank someone means that you are giving them praise and credit which means there is less or none for you
  - Pride always wants the credit, always wants the recognition, always needs to be thanked instead of thanking
  - This will keep you from being all that God desires for you
  - Paul came to finally understand that in his own life
  - **2 Cor 11** – Paul lists all of the experiences of his life and his pedigree that qualify him to say the things that he does; written in the middle of his missionary journeys
  - **I Tim 1:15** - *Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.* (Written just a year or so before he was martyred by Nero)

**SECOND WAY**

- Paul often included in his words of thanks in *prayer*
  - What is the content of your time of prayer?
  - Is it with heartfelt thanks for all that He has done for you
  - Or is it a list of things we want like a spoiled child sitting on Santa's knee?
- **Matthew 6** – how Jesus taught His disciples to pray
  - **9** – Holy is His name; praising Him for who He is
  - **10** – submitting our will to His
  - **11** – asking Him to supply our needs not our wants
  - **12** – forgiving our sins as we forgive other's sins
  - Augustine (late 4<sup>th</sup>/early 5<sup>th</sup> century theologian and philosopher) called this text “a terrible petition.” He pointed out that *if you pray these words while harboring an unforgiving spirit, you are actually asking God not to forgive you.*
  - Think about that for just a moment. If you pray “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors” while refusing to forgive those who have wronged you, this prayer which is meant to be a blessing becomes a self-inflicted curse. In that case you are really saying, “O God, since I have not forgiven my brother, please do not forgive me.”

- When we pray, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," we are asking God to forgive our sins *according to the same standard we have used* in forgiving the sins of others. There are 11 words in that sentence, but one of them is especially important. It's the little word "as." Everything hangs on the meaning of that word. "As" is the conjunction that joins the first half of the petition with the second half. When Jesus says "as," he is setting up a comparison between the way we forgive and the way God forgives us.
- 13 – protection from desires of the flesh
- Then the next verses further enforce verse 12 and are 2 of the most powerful in the Bible – (14-15)
  - Forgiveness is a lynchpin of our lives as Christians and in fact all of Christianity
  - It can open the door to living a life of great fulfillment in all that God has for us or it can keep us a prisoner in a time or place that we will never escape from
  - It is not about what was done to you (that cannot be undone) it is about what it is continuing to do to you if you do not forgive
  - DO NOT allow one more day to go by with unforgiveness in your heart
- Col 1:3 – *while we are praying for you*
  - Just as he was in his thankfulness Paul did not have to remember to pray for the Colossians - he was always in prayer
  - 1 Thess 5:16-18 - *Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*
  - Paul's words regarding prayer are again written in the aggressive present tense meaning on-going
  - Rev. 3:20 - *Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.*
  - The word Paul uses for prayer is one that's meaning is **inclusive** of all the types so prayer (7 types)
    1. submission; 2. confession; 3. petition; 4. supplication; 5. intercession; 6. praise; 7. thanksgiving
  - So Paul is saying – whatever you need prayer for I am praying that for you
- Many translations use the word "always" in the verse to emphasize the meaning
- Do you pray that way?
- Be aware of all 7 types of prayer and pray in all 7 ways
- Unforgiveness will interfere with how we pray and even block our prayers (Psa 66:18 - *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear*)

### THIRD WAY

- (4) *because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all God's people*
- Paul tells us in the 4<sup>th</sup> verse why he gives God thanks for them
- He is in prison but still sends a word of encouragement
- Words of encouragement and compliment
  - When was the last time you gave a compliment to someone important in your life
  - Now, if you had to think about it, why?
  - For many it is simply because they are so wrapped up in what is going on in their own lives that they don't think of someone else enough to say anything

- I have never heard one good reason for not giving someone a compliment or word of encouragement
- Many people are starving for just one kind word
- That person might be living in your house, sitting next to you in class, working next to you OR treating you badly, making you mad, being unfair
- Your life circumstances should never determine how you treat other people
  - Jesus was treated as badly and unfairly as anyone who ever lived yet He loved the people around Him
  - So much so that He sacrificed Himself for them, for you, and for me
- What we also see in verse 4 is that the people's faith in Jesus becomes a well-spring of love that they share with one another
- How do these ways of treating people, gratitude – prayer – encouragement, affect you?
  - Do they change the way you live or are they things that you simply do from time to time allowing you to feel better about yourself or out of obligation?
  - A heart that is humbly focused on these things changes a person at the very core of who they are