

Sunday, August 16, 2009—Praying the Powerful Prayers of Paul—Sanctification Central: Paul's Prayers for the Thessalonians

Announcement Reminders

- Next Sunday—Right Division 101 and Grill Out
 - Bring Friends and Family
 - Grills, Meat, and a dish to pass
- Grace Life School of Theology Begins Sunday, September 13
 - 9:00 *Understanding Galatians and the Law*
 - 6:00 *Renewing Your Mind: Survey of the Book of Romans*
- Woman of Right Division Bible Study Begins Wednesday, September 9 at 7:00 pm
- Bible Conference October 2-4
 - Food—see Sister Cora Russ
 - Children's Ministry
 - Registration Table

Introduction

- We have covered a lot of ground in our current series entitled Praying the Powerful Prayers of Paul.
- I hope that as we have studied through the details of Paul's prayers that you have not lost sight of the reason we have been doing this.
- To learn how to pray by studying Paul's example.
- I Corinthians 11:1—when we follow Paul's example we are following Christ because it was the risen exalted Christ that gave Paul all of the revelation he records in his epistles.
- Galatians 1:11-12
- Philippians 3:17
- The title of this morning's message is Sanctification Central: Paul's Prayers for the Thessalonians.

- Peppered throughout Paul's letters to the Thessalonians are a series of short but extremely relevant and practical prayers that He offers on their behalf.
- As I have studied through these prayers I was looking for a common theme that would help me tie them all together. In so doing it seemed to me that the issue of sanctification and holiness was a reoccurring theme.

Three Important Biblical Concepts

- Justification—means to reckon, or to declare one righteous:
 - This does not mean that the Believer is made righteous as far as his practical life is concerned. It means that God declares him/her to be righteous in Jesus Christ. Christ's righteousness is your righteousness.
 - Romans 3:24—Grace is the means by which we are justified
 - Romans 5:1—Faith is the means by which justification is appropriated
 - Romans 4:25—the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the guarantee of our justification
- Sanctification—means to separate to set apart as Holy unto God:
 - The term sanctification is a term that designates ownership. A person, place, or thing is separated from its prior owner and becomes the possession of its new owner. Also, in the process of transferring the ownership there is a cleansing. Since the new owner is God, the person, place, or thing must be consecrated.
 - Hebrews 10:10—"are sanctified"
 - I Corinthians 6:11—"are sanctified"
 - Positional Sanctification—I Stand "in Christ, Complete! Believers are cleansed from their sins and have been set apart unto God.
 - Now because the believer belongs to God, God instructs the Believer to live a life of separation. We are to live a pure life because we are saved, not in order to get saved.

- Practical Sanctification—deals with the state or condition of my Christian walk.
 - II Corinthians 6:17, 7:1, II Timothy 2:19, 21
- Glorification—is the third step and is still future for believers:
 - Glorification will occur at the Day of Redemption (rapture) when we will receive our glorified immortal bodies. It is here that we will finally be set apart from this world and sinfulness that resides in our fleshly bodies. One could call this our final sanctification.
 - Romans 8:30

I Thessalonians 3:12-13

- This is not the first time that Paul has prayed that a church would increase (superabound) and abound (or increase a fixed number of measure) in love.
- Philippians 1:9-10
- Christian love and charity is to be demonstrated not just toward believers but also to them that are not of the household of faith.
 - I Thessalonians 5:15
 - I Corinthians 13:1-5
 - Romans 13:8
 - Galatians 5:13-14
 - Galatians 5:6
- Notice that in verse 13 Paul has an end in mind when he prays that they might be increase and abound in love. The end is that God the Father would stablish their hearts.
- Stablish—means to make stable, place firmly, set fast, fix, make firm, or render constant
 - Romans 1:11
 - Romans 16:25
 - I Thessalonians 3:2
 - II Thessalonians 2:17, 3:3

- Unblameable—means blameless, deserving no censure, free from fault or defect
 - Philippians 3:6
 - Philippians 2:15
 - Hebrews 8:7—faultless
- Holiness = moral purity. II Corinthians 7:1
- How long is this established heart unblameable before God supposed to last? Until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Is this not the exact concept of Practical Sanctification that we discussed earlier?
- Now we have the background to better understand Paul’s prayer for the Thessalonians in chapter 5 verses 23-24

I Thessalonians 5:23-24

- We have studied this verse many times to prove that man is a trichotomy made in the image of God possessing three parts a spirit, soul, and body.
- However Paul’s prayer here is that the Thessalonians would experience a complete sanctification of their entire person.
- Our inner man needs to be sanctified just as much as our outward man.
 - Philippians 4:8
 - II Corinthians 10:3-5—the Sanctification of our outward man begins with the sanctification of the thought life of our inward man.
- I Corinthians 6:19—as believers our bodies no longer belong to us. We literally carry Jesus Christ with us everywhere we go.
- I Thessalonians 4:1-7--these verses are very clear regarding the sanctification of our bodies.
- Living a godly life is not so much about disciplining the flesh to avoid doing what is wrong as it is about living by the Spirit to do what is right. Consider the context of I Thessalonians 5:23