

"Paul's Prayer for the Saints at Colossae"

Part 2

Colossians 1:9-14

Introduction: The last time we were in Colossians was December 17th. In that study we were looking at Paul's prayer for the saints who were at Colossae. The first point we considered was why he prayed for them.

Notice Colossians 1:9

The words "For this cause" tell us why he prayed. These words sweep back over the previous verses. In those previous verses we learned about how the church was growing in the grace of God. They were faithful, loving, fruit bearing believers. So why pray for them? Because it is when a church is growing in spiritual strength that they become a target of the enemy. That is exactly what had happened at this church. The seeds of Gnosticism had been planted in the church and for this reason they needed prayer.

"Praying for Fellow Believers"

Part 2

As we look at this prayer which Paul offered, we will see that he had 4 specific requests.

Notice Colossians 1:9 again.

1. That they would know the will of God.

In our last study we looked at a key word in understanding the will of God and it is a word that Paul uses 2 times here.

Notice Colossians 1:9-10

The word is "knowledge." Knowledge is the key to knowing the will of God for your life. We must be very careful about making decisions based upon the feelings in our heart.

Jeremiah 17:9

⁹ The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

If we are going to know the will of God for our lives, we must take the time to read the Word of God.

Hosea 4:6

⁶ **My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge:** because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

Application:

A lack of knowledge concerning the principles of God's Word will leave you walking in the dark. If you neglect the Word of God then do not expect to know the will of God. A knowledge of the Word of God is directly connected with the knowing the will of God. In many circles of believers today there is a famine and when there is a famine there will be many weak people.

Amos 8:11-12

¹¹ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, **but of hearing the words of the LORD:**

¹² And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it.

Notice closely in Amos 8:11 that it is not a lack OF the Word of God but it is a famine of HEARING the Word of God. What was it that affected the hearing of Israel? It was material prosperity. We see this in what Amos wrote.

Amos 4:1

Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan, that are in the mountain of Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy, which say to their masters, Bring, and let us drink.

Amos 5:11-12

¹¹ Forasmuch therefore as your treading is upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat: **ye have built houses of hewn stone,** but ye shall not dwell in them; **ye have planted pleasant vineyards,** but ye shall not drink wine of them.

¹² For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.

Amos 6:3-6

³ Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near;

⁴ **That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall;**

⁵ *That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of musick, like David;*

⁶ **That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments:** *but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.*

It was the material prosperity that plugged their ears and caused the famine of hearing the Word of God. Let us understand that prosperity is not sinful but when it consumes the people and they find their rest and hope in prosperity, then it becomes a major problem.

Notice Colossians 1:10

2. He prayed for their walk.

When Paul speaks of our walk, he is talking about how a believer lives. Here in this verse, just like the previous verse, the walk is connected with knowledge. The Bible serves as a map for life.

Psalm 119:105, 133

¹⁰⁵ *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*

¹³³ **Order my steps in thy word:** *and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.*

Proverbs 3:1, 5-6

My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:

⁵ *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*

⁶ *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and **he shall direct thy paths.***

Application:

What does it mean to walk worthy of the Lord?

Notice Colossians 1:10 again.

To walk worthy is to walk in a way that pleases the Lord. It is living in the Spirit so that we bear the fruit of the Spirit, and it is growing in knowledge.

When we spend time in the Word of God, we can then know the will of God which will then change our walk with God so that it will be well pleasing to Him. This then leads to a fruitful life. This is what Paul prays for these believers, that they would be fruitful in every good work.

3. He prayed for them to be mighty warriors.

Notice Colossians 1:11

When we look closely at this verse, we will see that Paul is praying for these believers to be warriors that have self-control. The strength that is mentioned here is not physical strength, but it is spiritual strength in the inner man.

Ephesians 3:14-16

¹⁴ *For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

¹⁵ *Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,*

¹⁶ *That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man:*

Why did these believers need to be strengthened with God's power? They were in a spiritual battle and they needed to be able to stand against the attacks of the enemy. Paul knew that the enemy could be persistent and if they were not strengthened, they could very easily grow weary and worn down, which could possibly lead to compromise.

Application:

When we were saved, we did not get put on the playground but we were placed on the battleground. We too are in need of God's power so that we can be strengthened in the inner man. This strength comes as we grow in the knowledge of the Word of God. The church is made up of spiritual soldiers and when we come to this building, we enter a military barracks. This is to be a place where soldiers are taught and trained in the Word of God. The meeting place of the church must NEVER turn into a place of entertainment because entertainment will not help us in the battle.

2 Timothy 2:1-4

Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

² *And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

³ *Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*

⁴ *No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.*

The Bible is very clear about the fact that we are in a spiritual battle.

Ephesians 6:10-13

¹⁰ *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*

¹¹ *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

¹² *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

¹³ *Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

Notice Colossians 1:11 again.

The might that Paul prays for is to be mixed with patience and longsuffering. The word "patience" here has the idea of "remaining under" which means that to be patient is to be someone who is not easily moved under suffering. To be longsuffering is to be someone who is long tempered. This would be a person who is able to deal patiently with the imperfections of others. The opposite of all of this would be a person who is easily offended and is quick to seek retaliation. The last word in this verse tells us this is all to be done in "joyfulness." How can spiritual warfare combined with patience and longsuffering have anything to do with joyfulness? Let me give you a few thoughts to consider.

a. A spiritual battle will purge your life of unimportant concerns.

As we pass through life we get caught up in things and situations that are void of spiritual importance. But as we are wrapped up in these situations and then a strong spiritual battle comes into our lives, we are then quick to cast aside the concerns that have little value and turn our focus toward the battle that matters.

b. A spiritual battle will increase our faith.

1 Peter 1:5-7

⁵ *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

⁶ *Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:*

⁷ *That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:*

The spiritual battles we go through are designed to refine our faith and as our faith is refined it grows stronger. The stronger your faith the more joy you will have. Someone has said that a little faith will bring you to heaven and a lot of faith will bring heaven to your soul.

4. He prayed for their worship.

Notice Colossians 1:12-14

These believers were to give thanks because of what the Lord had done for them. God had made them qualified to receive the inheritance of the saints. What is the inheritance of the saints? We are never told exactly what our inheritance is but we can see several points about it.

- **We are joint heirs with Jesus.**

Romans 8:16-17

¹⁶ *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*

¹⁷ *And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*

- **Our inheritance is eternal.**

1 Peter 1:3-4

³ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

⁴ *To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,*

Conclusion:

Paul was praying that they would not forget what God had done for them.