

Paul's Prayer for Colossae # 3

Colossians 1: 9-14

It is apparent Paul was deeply burdened for the church at Colossae as he sought to convey his love and concern. We must keep in mind the circumstances of that time. These were difficult times for believers and this letter must've brought encouragement to them. Paul was well aware of the difficulties they faced and he wanted to ensure they were not alone. Our text this evening reveals a prayer Paul prayed for the church; however, this is not the only prayer he prayed for them. He made it a practice to pray for them continually, [v.9](#).

Can you imagine the joy this brought to their hearts, just knowing the Apostle was praying for them? There can be no doubt Paul was a man of prayer. I am sure there was power in his prayers. He walked with the Lord in such a way that God heard when Paul prayed. Surely if Paul recognized the need for prayer, we too should exercise prayer for the church and one another!

Now, I am convinced that with the exception of our Lord, Paul was likely the greatest preacher to ever expound upon a passage of Scripture. He was passionate about the Gospel and he desired to share the good news with all who would hear. He was a man who believed in the power of prayer and engaged in prayer consistently. However, we must not forget that Paul was just a man, a mere mortal saved by the grace of God. We know God is no respecter of persons. If Paul could pray in power and commune with the Lord, we can too. The same opportunities afforded Paul are available to all believers if we would only seize them. Let's examine the [aspects](#) of this prayer as we consider: [Paul's Prayer for Colossae](#).

I. The Supplication in the Prayer (9-12) – Paul begins by making supplication for the church at Colossae. There are several aspects of this supplication. He prayed for:

A. Their Wisdom (9) – [For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding](#). The church would never overcome or be successful in their spiritual endeavors without the wisdom of God. Life would continue to bring difficulty and decision. Each day would bring new opportunities and new challenges. They needed wisdom as they served the Lord.

- I think you would agree that we too need wisdom, especially in our modern society. Things are much more complex than they were just a few years ago. We are faced with less tolerance toward the faith and greater pressures to compromise. We need godly wisdom.
- He also prayed for [spiritual understanding](#). This goes hand in hand with wisdom. This literally means “*a mental putting together*.” Wisdom would be of little value if we lacked the ability

to put it together and into practice. We must put the various pieces together in order to apply truth in our lives.

B. Their Walk (10a) – *That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing.* Our walk is to glorify Christ. Our life should reveal what Jesus has done for us and the change that has taken place; we're no longer the same! The word **walk** means to "*set our lives, all of it, after Christ.*" The word **worthy** means "*to have the weight of or weigh as much as something else.*" So, our walk should weigh as much as the walk of Christ. That's a sobering thought! We are to live as He did.

- This will never happen in a carnal Christian. We must be totally submitted to God. I need the prayers of God's people to walk worthy and you do too! I can't live that life within myself. As we pray for each other, pray that God would guide our steps. Pray that we live according to the pattern Jesus set for us.

C. Their Work (10b) – *being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.* Paul also prayed that they be fruitful in every good work. He was praying that God would open doors of opportunity for them and that they would have the boldness and dedication to pass through them.

- How many lost people came through our doors lately crying out that they needed to be saved? You see, praying for the lost is good, but praying for fruitful Christians is better. Jesus saw the field ready for harvest, but He didn't pray for the field. **Mat.9:38 – Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.** If we really want to see souls saved, pray for fruitful Christians. Pray for those who are witnessing and inviting them to come. **Eph.2:8 – For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:** Rom.10:17 – **So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.**

- He also prayed that their walk would result in an **increased knowledge of God.** He wanted them to know God on a deeper level, growing spiritually in Christ. There is no better way to grow in the Lord than through a daily walk with Him. It is there we learn to fellowship with Him, trust Him in trials, learn Him, and love Him more!

- Each of us needs to grow daily. I challenge you to pray that we will develop a deeper relationship with Christ. I pray that we will abandon the shallow water and dive into the deep things of God. We all need a closer walk, growing spiritually. Let's make that an object of prayer.

D. Their Welfare (11) – *Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;* Paul was deeply concerned with the spiritual welfare of each

believer. He knew these attributes were essential to a healthy Christian life. Let's look at these attributes individually.

- **Patience** – This is *endurance when circumstances are difficult*. Patience doesn't accept defeat; *it is endurance in action*. It doesn't sit idly by waiting on God or someone else to achieve something. It is the soldier who endures the battle, seeking complete victory. It is the runner enduring the hardships of the race seeking the finish. It is the Christian who will not accept the lies of this world and believe that all hope is lost. We need God's power for patience.

- **Longsuffering** – This is *possessing self-restraint*. Where patience deals with circumstances, longsuffering deals with people. It allows us to overlook their faults and differences, loving them as Christ does, seeing them as Christ sees them. It doesn't give up on a man just because he doesn't act or behave as we think he should. It is a spirit of fellowship and compassion for all, even those who may have wronged us. We need that kind of spirit in the church today.

- **Joyfulness** – I think you would agree that many have lost their joy. The difficulties and circumstances of life have left them feeling defeated and desperate. There is joy in serving the Lord. They just need to rediscover His joy in their lives. Happiness is dependent on circumstances, but joy remains even in the midnight hour. We need to pray for those who need their joy restored.

E. Their Worship (12) – [Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light](#): Paul prayed the church would have a heart of thanksgiving, offering worship and praise unto the Lord for their position in Him. This was not an ordinary group of people with little hope. He was writing to the body of Christ, those who had been adopted into God's family, heirs of God and joint-heirs of Christ. Surely they should desire to worship the Lord for the glorious inheritance that waited them in heaven.

- We gather regularly under the banner of worship, but how often do we genuinely worship? Would you not agree we have much to praise the Lord for? We may be aware of the many blessings we've received and the benefits of being a child of God, but often we fail to express our thanksgiving and offer our Lord the worship He is due. We ought to pray that God would stir our hearts, drawing us closer to Him, in such a way that worship would be prevalent among us! Worship should come natural for Christians!

II. The Adoration in the Prayer (13) – [Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son](#): As Paul continues to reveal the aspects of his prayer

for the church, he reminds them of the goodness of the Lord. This served as a challenge for them to worship, but I also believe Paul became consumed with an attitude of praise as he too thought of all the Lord had done for him and all believers. He was thankful for:

A. God's Power (13a) – [Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness](#). Surely Paul remembered the grip religion had on him. He must've remembered when he was blinded to the light of the Gospel, surrounded by darkness. He likely considered the lives many in Colossae lived prior to their salvation. Paul knew the bondage of sin and the inability of man to free himself. He knew he was positioned in Christ by the mighty hand of God. He alone had the power to bring him out of the darkness of sin into the light of salvation.

- That stirs an attitude of praise within my heart as well. I was lost and undone before the Lord. I was hopelessly separated without any ability to free myself from such a dreadful state. I rejoice for the day the Lord came to me, through His Spirit, revealing my need and saving my soul. At that moment I was set free from the power of darkness and the bondage of sin!

B. God's Provision (13c) – [and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son](#): Paul reminded them they weren't just brought out of darkness and left to fend for themselves. The believer has been translated into the kingdom of Christ.

- Isn't that wonderful? God came to us in our sin, unworthy and undeserving of His grace, and not only brought us out of depravity, but He placed us within the kingdom of His Son. We were translated, *changed in place and position*, from one bound in the darkness of sin unto the family of God. I am no longer the man I used to be. I no longer inhabit the old sinful position as before. I have been placed in a position of complete acceptance through Christ my Lord.

III. The Confirmation in Prayer (14) – [In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins](#): Paul's prayer of adoration becomes a prayer of confirmation as he considers the certainties believers enjoy in Christ. He knew Colossae faced much adversity, but he confirms their position in Christ. He has done for us what no other could. We are secure in Him. Consider:

A. The Believer's Redemption (14a) – [In whom we have redemption through his blood](#). Paul confirms the purpose for Christ's coming: the redemption of mankind. This has the idea of "*being set free through a ransom*." We were alienated from God in sin. The sin of humanity had to be atoned if there was any hope of being justified in the eyes of God. For sin to be atoned, a sacrifice had to be made, a price had to be paid. We were guilty of sin, indebted to God, and unable to

purchase our redemption. Christ came to do what we could never do for ourselves. He became the sacrificial atonement, offering His body as the perfect sacrifice to appease the holiness and righteous demands of God.

- All are born in sin, separated from God. Christ made a way that we could be redeemed, ransomed from our sin. He has paid my account in full and I am eternally cleared of sin's debt.

B. The Believer's Reconciliation (14b) – *In whom we have redemption through his blood, **even the forgiveness of sins***: Through Christ, believers are reconciled to God. The sin we were all guilty of has been forgiven, *sent away, released, and let go*. It is no longer charged to our account. As God views the saved, He sees them in light of the righteousness of His Son. At the moment of salvation, the sins of the past are cleansed in the blood of Jesus. They are no longer remembered against us.

- There is a wonderful aspect here we need to consider. I have often thought that God providing for my redemption would have been enough. Just providing a way to avoid His righteous judgment is more than any could deserve. But, God didn't stop there. Through our relationship with Christ, we are reconciled to God. The sin that once hindered our fellowship has been removed. We have been cleansed, declared righteous, and now have the privilege of walking in fellowship with the Lord. We can come before Him in prayer. We experience His presence in worship. Reconciliation is a wonderful aspect of the Christian experience. If we could ever grasp all that we have in Christ, our lives and our worship would be radically transformed!

Conclusion: We have been privileged to consider a powerful prayer Paul prayed on behalf of the Colossians. He wanted to encourage them in their faith and do all he could to ensure the blessing and power of God in their lives. He knew the God they served and the benefits afforded through Christ the Son. There was much for them to enjoy and Paul wanted them to experience the fullness of God in their lives.

We too ought to desire His fullness in our lives as well as in the lives of others. There is power in prayer. We pray about many things, but do we pray for the church and one another as we should? Allow this passage to guide you as you pray for the church. There is so much available to us through the Lord. We need to pray for God's touch on our lives.

This prayer also offers a glorious reminder of the grace of God and the provision He made for sinful humanity. Christ paid the sin debt we owed as He died upon the cross. Redemption has been made. Have your sins been forgiven, washed away in the blood of Christ? He stands ready to save today if you will look to Him by faith!