

COLOSSIANS: A POWERFUL APOSTOLIC PRAYER

Colossians 1:1-13

Paul writes this letter to the Colossians in 60 A.D. while in prison. He wrote this letter very close to the time he wrote the letter to the Ephesians. Colosse was located about 100 miles east of Ephesus and was near to Laodicea. Unlike most of Paul's letters to the churches, Paul had not ever been to Colosse and he did not start the church there. The Colossian church was started by Paul's co-worker Epaphras (see Acts 19:10). The church in Colosse came under attack from gnostic teachers and Judaistic zealots which truly caused an upset in the young church. The gnostic taught that all matter was evil (so Jesus could not be God because He had a body and hence He must be evil), plus they proclaimed they had a special 'secret knowledge' and they worshipped angels. The Judaism effect came through legalistic teaching, circumcision (for attaining salvation), ceremonialism, etc. Epaphras went to visit Paul in prison and the Book of Colossians is, at least in part, the result of that visit. Paul wrote Colossians to help the church fight these heresies and to empower them to rightly relate to the true Jesus and His followers.

1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

² To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father. Colossians 1:1-2 NASB

- **Paul is an apostle by the will of God...**
 - **God's choice for Paul had comprehended the purpose behind God apprehending him.**

Not that I have now attained [this ideal], or have already been made perfect, but I press on to lay hold of (grasp) and make my own, that for which Christ Jesus (the Messiah) has laid hold of me and made me His own. Philippians 3:12 AMPC

- **Paul tells the Colossians that he is an apostle...(remember Paul did not personally know these people)**

COLOSSIANS: A POWERFUL APOSTOLIC PRAYER

²⁷ Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it. ²⁸ And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. I Corinthians 12:27-28 NASB

⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. Ephesians 2:19-22 NASB

⁴ By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; ⁶ to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, ⁷ of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. Ephesians 3:4-7 NASB

¹¹ And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 4:11-13 NASB

- ***Paul addresses this letter to the saints in Colosse...saints, holy ones, those dedicated to God.***
 - ***He greets them (v2) with a blessing of grace and peace.***
 - ***In Colossians 1:2, Paul says to the people in the church at Colosse..."Grace to you."***
 - ***Interestingly in Colossians 4:18, the last verse in the book, Paul says, "Grace be with you..."***

COLOSSIANS: A POWERFUL APOSTOLIC PRAYER

- **"Grace be to you..."**
- **"Grace be with you..."**
- **Paul was praying that the grace of God would be an empowering flow and abiding touch on their lives and the life of their church.**

³ We continually give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah), as we are praying for you, ⁴ For we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus [the leaning of your entire human personality on Him in absolute trust and confidence in His power, wisdom, and goodness] and of the love which you [have and show] for all the saints (God's consecrated ones), ⁵ Because of the hope [of experiencing what is] laid up (reserved and waiting) for you in heaven. Of this [hope] you heard in the past in the message of the truth of the Gospel,

⁶ Which has come to you. Indeed, in the whole world [that Gospel] is bearing fruit and still is growing [by its own inherent power], even as it has done among yourselves ever since the day you first heard and came to know and understand the grace of God in truth. [You came to know the grace or undeserved favor of God in reality, deeply and clearly and thoroughly, becoming accurately and intimately acquainted with it.] ⁷ You so learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ in our stead and as our representative and yours. ⁸ Also he has informed us of your love in the [Holy] Spirit. Colossians 1:3-8 NASB

- **Paul thanks God for this group of believers and speaks of his consistent prayer for them.**
- **Paul and his team have prayed for the Colossians ever since they became believers.**
- **The faith the Colossians had in Jesus and their love for each other was well known to Paul and his team. (v4)**

Faith in Jesus

Love for the saints

COLOSSIANS: A POWERFUL APOSTOLIC PRAYER

- *Real faith in Jesus results in real love for people.*
- *Paul recognized their hope for what is reserved for them in heaven. (v5)*

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 1 Peter 1:3-5 NASB

- *The gospel is bearing fruit and growing by its own inherent power, since you came to know the grace of God in truth, in reality...clearly, thoroughly, becoming acquainted with it. (v6-7)*
 - *They also had a true love for one another in the Holy Spirit. (v8)*

⁹ For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹ strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light. Colossians 1:9-12 NASB

- *Paul's prayer for the church at Colosse:*
 - *He prays that they would be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding. (v9)*

COLOSSIANS: A POWERFUL APOSTOLIC PRAYER

- ***The Amplified Bible says that his prayer is for them to have... "comprehensive insight into the ways and purposes of God, and in understanding and discernment of spiritual things..." (v9)***
- ***He prays these things so that they might have a 'worthy walk.'" (v10)***

¹¹ strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light. Ephesians 4:1-2 NASB

- ***He prays that they will be pleasing to the Lord in all respects, in deeds, and devotional desires.***
- ***He prays that they will be fruitful in every good work, growing and increasing in the knowledge of God. (v10)***

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. Ephesians 1:17 NASB

Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Matthew 5:16 NASB

- ***Paul prays that the light of their lives and their labor of love will grow increasingly.***
 - ***He prays that as they grow in their knowledge of God they will be strengthened with all power according to His glorious might...***
 - ***..."That they be invigorated and strengthened with all power according to the might of His glory..." Colossians 1:11 AMPC***
 - ***All power, the power of His Word, His ways, His love, His character, His gifts, and His wisdom.***
 - ***This invigorating power is to equip us for every kind of endurance, patience, and forbearance, with joy. V11 AMPC***

COLOSSIANS: A POWERFUL APOSTOLIC PRAYER

- ***This is to result in our thanking God for Him qualifying us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.***
- ***He has qualified everyone who believes in Jesus to share the inheritance of the saints in light.***
- ***We know this because:***

For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son. Colossians 1:13 NASB

- ***His rescue of us qualifies us in His eyes for His kingdom and His family.***
- ***This is some prayer!***