

*<sup>2</sup>Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; <sup>3</sup> praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; <sup>4</sup> that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak. <sup>5</sup> Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. <sup>6</sup> Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.*

# Prayers in Colossians

“Bookends”

Colossians 1:3-12 and 4:2-4

Colossians refers explicitly to aspects of prayer in five distinct passages

1:3–12; 2:7; 3:15–17; 4:2–4; 4:12-13; cf. 1:2; 4:18

# **\*Prayers in Colossians**

- Prayer is crucial in seeking grace and peace (Col. 1:2; 4:18).
- Prayer is crucial when expressing gratitude (1:3; 2:7; 3:15–17; 4:2).
- Prayer is crucial in seeking the facets of faith, love and hope (1:4–5).
- Prayer is crucial in seeking a healthy relationship to the Word (1:5; 2:7; 3:15–17).
- Prayer is essential to bear “fruit of the Spirit” (Col. 1:6, 8, 10).

# Prayers in Colossians

- Prayer is essential in fulfilling all service to God (Col. 1:7).
- Prayer is vital in relation to doing God's will (Col. 1:9).
- Prayer is essential in having the ability to live for Christ (1:11; 4:12-13).
- Prayer is a fitting response to God's creative work (Col. 1:16).
- Prayer is essential to the work of evangelism (4:3).

*With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,<sup>19</sup> and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel,<sup>20</sup> for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak (Eph. 6:18-20).*

*<sup>2</sup>Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; <sup>3</sup> praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; <sup>4</sup> that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak (Col. 4:2-4).*

# I. Paul's Command: Be Devoted in Prayer For Yourself and Your Church

*Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving (Col. 4:2)*

Literally, *In prayer be devoted* . . .

- A. Devoted in their prayer life in general (4:2).
- B. Devoted in their prayers for Paul (4:3-4).

Paul is saying that prayer must be a priority.

*These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with <sup>b</sup>the women, and Mary the <sup>c</sup>mother of Jesus, and with His <sup>c</sup>brothers (Acts 1:14).*

# **“Keeping alert”**

The word appears 23 times in the New Testament.

At least 13 times it is used for keeping alert for the coming of Christ (Matt. 24:42, 43; 25:13; Mark 13:34, 35, 37; Luke 12:37, 39; 1 Thess 5:6, 10; Rev. 3:2, 3; 16:15).



# “Keeping alert”

- The word is used 7 times with no eschatological significance (Matt. 26:38, 40, 41; Mark 14:34, 37, 38; Acts 20:31).
- The word is used 3 times where the context does not clearly indicate whether it is used with an eschatological sense or not (1 Cor. 16:13; 1 Pet. 5:8; **Col. 4:2**).
- Nevertheless, the idea of an “eschatological alertness” seems clearly possible (1 Cor. 16:22; 1 Pet. 1:3-9, 13; 5:10).

# Eschatology in Colossians

*. . . giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light (Col. 1:12).*

*For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son (Col. 1:13).*

*When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory (Col. 3:4).*

## Church at Sardis

*To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: "I know your deeds, that **you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.**"* <sup>2</sup>

***Wake up** (lit. "Keep becoming being awake or alert"), and strengthen the things that remain (what can be remembered), which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God. <sup>3</sup> So remember what (lit. "how") you have received and heard; and keep it (what was remembered), and repent.*

*Therefore **if you do not wake up** (or "become alert"), **I will come like a thief**, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.* <sup>4</sup>

*But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. <sup>5</sup> He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. <sup>6</sup> He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Rev. 3:1-6).*

# “With thanksgiving”

*. . . giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light (Col. 1:12).*

*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.<sup>16</sup> Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.<sup>17</sup> Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father (Col. 3:15-17).*

# Thanksgiving: Our Spiritual Condition

--We have a future and look forward with a blessed hope to the return of Christ (1:5, 12, 27).

--We are alive with Christ (2:13).

--We are called together in one spiritual body (3:15).

--We can sing with thankfulness because we have the word of Christ richly dwelling in us (3:16).

# The Requests For Ourselves and Our Church

Paul's Requests for the Colossians (Mike's message -- Colossians 1)

1. That He would make us wise and spiritually perceptive, specifically regarding His will.
2. That we would grow in fruitful good work.
3. That we would grow in knowledge of God.
4. That we would grow in strength reflecting God's strength.
5. That we would grow in joyful, steadfast patience.
6. That we would grow in gratitude for our adopted inheritance.

# The Requests For Ourselves and Our Church

Prayer for the necessary discernment to avoid the errors and false teaching about which Paul warns in Colossians 2.

Prayer for the new attitude based on heavenly privilege (3:1–4).

To put away the old style of life (3:5–11)

To put on the new manner of behavior (3:12–17).

To respond appropriately to new relationships with others (3:1-4:1).

“An open door for the Word” (4:3).

# Paul's Command - Part two: Be Devoted in Prayer For Me and My Fellow-workers

*. . . praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; <sup>4</sup> that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak (Col. 4:3-4).*



# Be Devoted in Prayer For Me and My Fellow-workers

Content of the prayer

--Not for his release.

--“Open door for the Word”.

--Purpose of the prayer

--“That we may speak forth the mystery of Christ.”

--“That I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.”

# The Mystery of Christ

*Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, <sup>26</sup> that is, the **mystery** which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, <sup>27</sup> to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this **mystery** among the Gentiles, **which is Christ in you, the hope of glory** (Col. 1:25-27).*

# Reason Why It Was Logically Necessary

--Paul's Call by God

*Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God (Rom. 1:1).*

*. . . the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister (Col. 1:23).*

*Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God (Col. 1:25).*

## **II. Paul's Command: A Lifestyle That Is Consistent With Their Prayer life**

*Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. <sup>6</sup> Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person (Col. 4:5-6).*

# Wisdom

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding (Prov. 9:10).*

“Wisdom” is living according to God’s instructions and commands.

*But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence (lit. “fear”) (1 Pet. 3:15).*

*For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit*



“Colossae” sign with the tell in the background





# **Answers To Their Prayers For Paul's Ministry**

“My circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the Gospel” (Phil. 1:12).

“My imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else” (Phil. 1:13).

“Most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear” (Phil. 1:14).



# Answers To Their Prayers For Paul

My circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the Gospel.

My imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else.

Most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.

# Answers To Their Prayers For Paul's Ministry

“Whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice” (Phil. 1:18).

“All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household” (Phil. 4:22).

--God obviously provided an open door for the word of Christ.

# Answers To Their Prayers For Paul

*For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,<sup>20</sup> according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.<sup>21</sup> For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain (Phil. 1:19-21).*

*“For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep, and was laid among his fathers” (Acts 13:36).*

# What About Us?

--Our prayers for ourselves and others:

--Pray for an “open door” for the gospel here, in the state of Idaho, the United States, and around the world (cf. Acts 1:8).

--Pray that the Holy Spirit would make us wise and spiritually perceptive, specifically regarding will of God.

--Pray that the Holy Spirit would enable us to live in a way that worthy and pleasing way to Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

--Pray that we would grow in faith and produce fruitful good works.

# What About Us?

- Pray that we would grow in knowledge of God.
- Pray that we would grow in strength reflecting God's strength.
- Pray that we would grow in joyful, steadfast patience.
- Pray that we would grow in gratitude for our adopted inheritance.

# What About Us?

- Pray that we have necessary discernment to avoid the errors and false teaching about which Paul warns in Colossians 2.
- Pray that we would seek a heavenly mindset based on our heavenly privilege (3:1–4).
- Pray for divine enablement to put away or lay aside all the things associated with our old self which died with Christ (3:5–11).
- Pray as those chosen by God that we would put on all the things associated with our new self granted to us in Christ (3:12–17).

## What About Us?

*Lord, may I (or “we”) be filled with the knowledge of Your will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that I (or “we”) will walk in a manner worthy of the You, to please You in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; that I (or we) might be strengthened with all power, according to Your glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to You, my (or “our”) Father, who has qualified me (or “us”) to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light (Col. 1:9-12).*