

## Colossians 1:9-14 Paul Prays for the Colossians

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# Introduction

We are looking at the importance of prayer. Believers should be praying for each other. Not just when one is facing difficulty, but also when they are growing and maturing in the faith.

To be effective in prayer, we need to be **God-centered** - to see the world and situations from His perspective. We also need to be **people-centered** and be concerned for their spiritual needs and wellbeing of others.

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## The Petition

Colossians 1:9

**For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;**

Last week we studied how Paul prayed that the Colossians **be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.**

Paul wants believers to have the knowledge of God's will.

**Wisdom** is to know God's truth and be able to see people and situations from God's perspective. **Understanding** is to be able to apply the knowledge of God's truth to the people and situations of daily life.

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## The Petition

Last week we looked at the **five purposes that are fulfilled in spiritual knowledge.**

1. A Worth Walk
2. A Fruitful Life
3. Spiritual Growth
4. Spiritual Strength
5. Endurance

Now Paul turns to praising God for what He is doing in the lives of the Colossians.

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# Colossians 1:9-14

For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; <sup>10</sup> that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing *Him*, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; <sup>11</sup> strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; <sup>12</sup> giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. <sup>13</sup> He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed *us* into the kingdom of the Son of His love, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

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## Giving Praise

I am thankful for our worship and praise music. However, we can become so focused on our prayer requests that we leave little time to simply thank Him.

The Bible is filled with passages that command us to give thanks to God (Ps 50:14; Ps 107:21-22; Ps 92:1; Eph 5:20; Col 3:17; Heb 13:15)

Jesus Himself gave thanks to God (Matt. 11:25; John 5:11; 11:41)

Scripture is filled with those who give thanks to God.

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## Giving Praise

On the other side, a failure to give thanks to God characterizes the wicked.

Romans 1:21

although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, **nor were thankful**, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

2 Timothy 3:2

For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, **unthankful**, unholy.

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## Giving Praise

**We should be most thankful for the work of Christ.** In our passage Paul gives thanks for the **results** of the work of Christ in our salvation. Paul sums up the doctrine of salvation in three great truths: **inheritance**, **deliverance**, and **transference**. They are both a description of salvation and a cause for thanksgiving.

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## Inheritance

Colossians 1:12

giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

Father emphasizes the personal, relational aspect of our union with God. **Before our salvation**, God was our Judge. We stood condemned before Him for violating His laws. But when we placed our faith in Christ (through His grace), God ceased being our sentencing Judge and became our gracious Father.

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Not only has God adopted us as His children, but He has also **qualified us to partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.** Qualified means “to make sufficient, to empower, to authorize, to make fit.” We are not qualified through our own efforts. God has qualified us through the finished work of Christ.

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**Before God saved us by His grace we were truly unqualified for our inheritance.** We were dead in the trespasses of our sins and cut off from God. We were living under the consequences of that sin and under the judgment of God.

Yet God by His grace **qualified** the unqualified to share in the inheritance.

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The Bible has much to say about our **inheritance.**

It consists first of **eternal life** (Matthew 19:29). Eternal life is far more than endless existence. It is a quality of life!

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Second, our inheritance includes **the earth** (Matt. 5:5). That focuses on the future aspect of our inheritance, when we will rule with Christ in the millennial kingdom (Rev. 20:6). The knowledge that we will inherit the restored earth should free us from the present pursuit of material possessions. Someday we will receive far more than we could ever gain in this life.

Third, we inherit **all the promises of God**. The writer of Hebrews exhorts us to be “imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises” (Heb. 6:12).

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## When do we receive our inheritance?

The present tense of the word **qualified** indicates **we have it now**. We have already been transferred from the domain of darkness into the Kingdom of Christ (Col. 1:13). We are already fellow heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:16–17). However, **the full possession of that inheritance is still future**. Peter refers to it as “an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you” (1 Pet. 1:4).

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Paul defines our inheritance as that of **the saints in light**. **Saints** refers to those who have been separated from the world and set apart to God. **The inheritance belongs to that group alone.**

1 Corinthians 6:9–10 asks the rhetorical question, “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.” (Also see Eph. 5:5 and Gal. 5:19-21.)

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The saints’ inheritance is **in the light**. **Light represents two things biblically.**

**Intellectually, it represents truth** (Ps. 119:130). **Morally, it represents purity** (Eph. 5:8–14). In contrast to Israel’s earthly inheritance, the saints’ inheritance is in the light. It is in the spiritual realm of truth and purity where God Himself dwells (1 Tim. 6:16). In his defense before King Agrippa in Acts 26, Paul spoke of the Lord’s commissioning him to preach to the Gentiles. The Lord told Paul that He was sending him “to open their eyes, *in order* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me” (v. 18). Paul no doubt had that event in mind when he wrote Colossians 1:12–14. **The saints are those who have turned from sinful darkness to righteous light** (cf. Eph. 5:8; 1 John 1:7).

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God has given us a **guarantee for our inheritance**. That guarantee is the indwelling **Holy Spirit**. In Ephesians 1:13–14, Paul writes, “In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of **promise**,<sup>14</sup> who is the **guarantee** of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.” The word “**promise**” is similar to the modern Greek word for engagement ring. “**Guarantee**” speaks of “down-payment.” **God has given us the Holy Spirit as the first installment on our future inheritance.** That is an objective fact, not dependent on our feelings.

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## So What ...

God has given us His **Spirit** and the His **Word** to give us confidence and understanding of our inheritance. No wonder Paul prayed “that the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints” (Eph 1:18).

A final question we all need to ponder...

**Are you living for the things of this world which is passing away, or are you living for eternity and an inheritance that is eternal?**

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