



9/4/25

I so wish I had a photographic memory!!! I read these passages and I love them... and then I go on through my day and so easily forget some of the most crucial points of the passages. I'm so glad the Lord doesn't expect us to get it all in one sitting. I'm so thankful that we have His word so that all the people like me who don't have a photographic memory can go back to it over and over... and let the Holy Spirit write it on our hearts.

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Colossians 1:3-14

How do I present my members as instruments for righteousness and not impurity and lawlessness? How do I keep my mind set on the Lord and not on things that go against Him? Paul's prayer in Colossians 1 gives me insight into where to set my heart and mind.

Vs. 3-8 ~ Before Paul prayed, he told the Colossian believers why he was so thankful for these people whom he had never met... but he loved them because he truly understood that they were his brothers and sisters in Christ. He was thankful for their faith, love, and hope. Interesting, in 1 Corinthians 13:13, he spoke of the importance of abiding in faith, love, and hope. No wonder he was thankful for this church. They were abiding in all three. Their faith was firmly rooted in Jesus. They loved each other. Their hope was in the promise of heaven. This is what the Lord wants to grow in me as well.

They were growing in faith, hope, and love because they heard the gospel and believed its truth. Everything is rooted in my faith that the gospel is true. It is through the gospel that I understand the grace of God, which is His kindness lavished on me through Jesus, though I don't deserve it.

These believers heard the truth of the gospel of grace, understood it, and learned more and more about it through a faithful believer named Epaphras. He was a "beloved fellow servant," following in the footsteps of Jesus who came not to be served, but to serve. He was a faithful minister of Christ, always seeking to point others to Jesus and not make a name for himself.

And he was excited about the Colossian believers' love "in the Spirit," that the proof that they were sealed by the Holy Spirit is that His love was growing in them. O Lord, I pray that I will see myself as a servant for You. "I will know how genuinely I view myself as a servant by how I respond when I'm treated like one" (David Jeremiah). Yikes. The Holy Spirit has some transforming to do in me. But I pray I will cooperate with Him and that I will be faithful to point others to Jesus and not seek to make a name for myself. The only legacy that matters is the legacy of Jesus.

Vs. 9-14 ~ Now I get to the prayer. Why did Paul need to pray for these people? They were growing in faith, hope, and love. Paul understood that growth in these is not a work of the flesh, but a work of the Spirit. He knew that we need the power of prayer at work in our lives because our natural default is to drift away from the Lord. It's usually not a conscious decision to walk away, but a slow drift... like a sheep that wanders to another field because the grass looks good.

Paul said, "Since we heard from Epaphras, we have not stopped praying for you." What was the prayer? That we would be FILLED with KNOWLEDGE of God's will in ALL spiritual wisdom and understanding. Being filled with knowledge of God and understanding of His heart and pleases Him takes the work of the Spirit. What this does NOT say, "I pray that you would pull up your bootstraps like big boys and power through no matter what." The wisdom to know and understand God does not come from me. It comes from the Spirit. And for that, I need prayer.

What comes of this wisdom and understanding in knowing God? Knowledge of how to walk worthy of the Lord, and how to please Him. And I would also say... it is only by the Holy Spirit that walking worthy of the Lord and pleasing will actually be my desire!

When I'm walking worthy and pleasing God because the Spirit has given me wisdom and understanding to do so, I will bear fruit in every good work that God calls me to do. I won't MAKE the fruit. I don't have that power. But I will bear fruit as the Lord grows it in me. And I will know the Lord more and more... not just about the Lord, but personally and experientially KNOW Him.

As I walk with the Lord and seek to do what pleases Him FULLY... how cool is it that I can FULLY please God... He is so gracious... as I do that, HE will give me the strength I need with ALL His power so that I can have ALL endurance and patience WITH JOY. By God's strength, I can patiently endure any circumstance, not gritting my teeth and waiting for the shoe to drop, but actually going through it with JOY. John 15 tells me that God wants to give me abundant joy as I abide in Him, let His word abide in me, and abide in His love in obedience.

O Lord, without Your strength I have no endurance... muscling never works. Without Your strength I have no patience... but I frantically and ignorantly take matters into my own hands to try to overcome it, and it never works. Without Your strength, I have no joy. Help me to completely depend on You! I will never regret it.

As I know the Lord, understand Him better, and receive His wisdom so that I can please Him, gratitude will flow from my heart because He has "qualified me to share in the inheritance of the saints in light." Who are the saints in light? Believers in Jesus. He makes me a saint. He is the light. I was in darkness. He delivered me from its domain. But He didn't just rescue me and drop me off somewhere so that I could be captured by the enemy once again. He placed me with Him in His heavenly kingdom where no evil can steal my sainthood. Jesus has redeemed me and forgiven me. This is why I can be grateful.

O Lord, if I set my mind on the things of the flesh, I will live in doubt, hopelessness, ignorance, impatience, weakness, and no joy. The flesh offers empty promises and fruit that leads to death. But being with You brings knowledge, wisdom, strength, endurance, patience, hope, faith, joy, and gratitude. How could I not be grateful??? I did nothing to deserve such kindness and love from You who have redeemed me and forgiven me! Thank You for the grace of the gospel. I pray that I will never take You and Your incredible sacrificial love for granted. I pray that I will believe and receive that I am actually able to fully please You. You are like the father of a toddler who celebrates every new stage of life... and lovingly helps her overcome the things that will hurt her. Praise Your name!