

Paul's Prayer for the Colossians

Colossians 1:1-12

Guest Speakers at Calvary Chapel
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REVIEW OF INTRODUCTION

Good evening, we will be continuing our study in the Book of Colossians. First as you begin to read and study a passage; come with questions; and pray and ask God to reveal what HE would have you learn. There are typically six questions that we can come to the Bible with; five “W” and one “H” question.

The five “W” questions are:

1. Who?
2. What?
3. Where?
4. When?
5. Why?

and the “H” question is HOW.

The book of Colossians is known as one of the prison Epistles; meaning that they were written when Paul was imprisoned in Rome. (OUR WHERE) The others are the Books of Ephesians, Philippians and Philemon. It was written approximately 60-62 A.D. (OUR WHEN) HOW do we know this? Because the Book of Acts concludes with Paul in a Roman Prison.

Acts 28:30 (NKJV)

“Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house” Paul was in the Roman prison after he was brought before Festus and appealed to stand before Caesar. Acts 25:10-12 . Paul is still alive at the end of the book of Acts. It is believed that Paul was beheaded in Rome approximately 67-68 A.D.

According to the Lexham Bible Dictionary:

Colossae was a city in the province of Phrygia located in the Lycus Valley within Anatolia, or Asia Minor, about 120 miles east of the major port city of Ephesus (Arnold, Colossians, 73). Today this is part of southwestern Turkey. In the first century AD, Colossae was a small agrarian town. However, in the 5th century BC, Colossae was a thriving economy, known especially for its unique textiles and wool (Moo, Colossians, 26).

Yet, the eventual demise of Colossae was linked to the construction of a trade route in the third century that went west of Colossae to Laodicea (Wilson, Biblical Turkey, 194). Eventually Laodicea became a prominent city, and Colossae turned into a rural community. Thus, in the first century Colossae was a rather insignificant city in the Roman world (Arnold, Colossian Syncretism, 4).

Paul had many different reasons when writing his Epistles. Encouragement; addressing a particular sin in the church; (1 & 2nd Corinthians). The Books of Ephesians and the Book of Colossians are doctrine. The theme of the Book of Ephesians is “The Church of Christ.” The doctrine taught in the Book of Colossians is Christ, the Head of the Church. This Epistle will focus primarily on the doctrine of the Deity of Jesus Christ. These letters were sent

to the individual churches; but were not intended to stay there only. These Epistles were to be shared among the other churches in the region.

Lets Read Colossians Chapter 1 Verses 1-8 and then come back to comment on it.

Colossians 1:1–8 (NKJV)

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ *who are* in Colosse:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints; because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, which has come to you, as *it has* also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as *it is* also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth; as you also learned from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, who also declared to us your love in the Spirit.

Here in verse 1 Paul identifies himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ. APOSTLE (ἀπόστολος, apostolos). Someone, or something, sent. Derived from the verb “to send out” (ἀποστέλλειν, apostellein). In the New Testament, usually refers to someone sent as an authorized agent by Jesus or the Christian community.²

Paul uses this title to convey his authority; for the issue with the church that is about to address.

In Verse 2, we have Paul’s typical greeting: “*Grace to you and peace from God Our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*”

The Greek Word for Grace is Caris and the Hebrew Word for Peace is Shalom. It is impossible to know the peace of God without understanding the Grace of God.

We also have in verse two, two separate words for God (the supreme being and deity); one referring to God THE Father and one referring to Jesus the son.

The Greek Word (*Theos*) is used to describe God the Father; while the Greek Word (*Kyrios*) is used to describe Jesus the Son. ***Why is this important, you may ask?***

It is important ***because the two separate and distinct words are used for two separate distinct persons of the GodHEAD*** and referring to both of them as God; the supreme being. I will get into this in more detail shortly.

In Verses 3 and four. Paul reminds the church at Colossae that he thanks God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for them and the faith that they have in Christ Jesus and of their love for the saints.

Colossians 1:5 NKJV

Because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel.

As Christians we have hope of eternal life in heaven with Jesus. Why? Because of the Gospel.

What is the Gospel?

Turn to 1 Corinthians Chapter 15 and we will read verses 1-4.

1 Corinthians 15:1–4 NKJV

Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the Gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed

in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

The Gospel—very simply is that Jesus lived a sinless life. HE died on the cross for our sins. HE was buried and rose again on the third day.

HOPE — And How Important Is It?

Well in the 1950's a scientist named Dr. Curt Richter from Harvard University performed a series of experiments using water, buckets, and both domesticated and wild rats which resulted in a surprising discovery within the field of psychology.

In the first experiment, Richter placed his test subjects into large buckets half filled with water with even those rats which were considered above average swimmers, giving up and dying within a few short minutes.

In the second experiment, Richter pulled each rat out just as it was about to give up, due to exhaustion, and let them rest for a few moments. Upon inserting the rats back into the bucket of water, Richter found that the rats continued to struggle to survive for up to 60 hours! It appeared as though the rats now believed that if they continued to push forward and put forth enough effort, eventually they would be rescued once again. Richter recorded in his notes, "after elimination of hopelessness, the rats do not die".

The rats in this experiment had the "hope" that they would be saved again before they would drown. This is a perfect example of hope.

As Believers—Where Does Our Hope Lie?

As believers, since the day that Jesus rose from the dead; **we have the sure promise** that we will have eternal life in heaven, where there will be no more tears; no more pain; no more suffering; and most importantly NO MORE SIN.

I know sometimes we can face things that are very disappointing and discouraging. Maybe you're facing the loss of a loved one or battling a prolonged illness. We can continue in and through these things—if we do not lose hope. But we must put our faith in Jesus Christ alone for our salvation.

Can I encourage you not to give up; not to lose hope?

We know as Christians that heaven will be better than on Earth. We may need to cling to this hope in the coming weeks, months and years as our country continues down the path that it is on.

Jesus Offers True Hope

Hebrews 4:15–16 (NKJV)

For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

If you are listening to this message and have not surrendered your life and put your faith in the debt that Jesus paid for your sins on the cross, you do not have this hope. You need to repent of your sins and put your full faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

If you have not put your faith in Jesus yet, what is stopping you? God could be using the very trial and difficulty that you are facing to bring you to the "end of your rope". To let go and stop putting your faith in yourself and your own works to surrender and trust Jesus.

I was not planning on talking about this, but this came to my mind as I was preparing the message. If you are having thoughts of suicide. May I please beg you not to do it. Your life has meaning and these thoughts are not of God. Those thoughts are of Satan, who wants to steal; kill and destroy. Satan cannot harm God, he is a created being and not even equal to God. In his rebellion the only way that he can “hurt” God is by hurting those who are created in His image. **God loves you and cares about you so much that HE sent Jesus on a search and rescue mission to seek and to save the lost.**

Colossians 1:6 (NKJV)

which has come to you, as *it has* also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as *it is* also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth.

Walking In True Hope

The goal of the Christian life, as we have been studying recently in John 15:1-11, is to bear fruit. We bear fruit for Christ, by abiding in Christ and remembering that He is the vine and we are the branches, for without Him, we can do nothing. We need to stay connected to Him and let Jesus live his life through us.

We stay connected to Jesus, by spending time with Him in His Word; and through prayer. This connection is not through coercion or force, but out of a heart of love for our Lord and Savior. We need to cultivate this heart each and every day.

It is important to remember that for the believer, God answers every one of our prayers. Just because HE does not answer in the way that WE want, does not mean that HE did not answer our prayer. HE answers every one of our prayers with a yes, no or wait.

As Greg Laurie has stated:

**If the request is not right and we are not ready ; God says no.
If the request is right, and our heart is right, but the timing is not; God says slow.
If the request is right, but our heart is not right; God says grow.
But if the request is right, our heart is right and the timing is right; God say GO.**

We come to know the grace of God, as we understand what grace is. Grace is simply unmerited favor. It's getting something we don't deserve.

(Explain the difference between Justice, mercy and grace.)

How do we know God in Truth?

By spending time with Him in His word. Jesus said in

John 17:17 (NKJV)

Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

Yes, His word is truth. Turn to [Psalm 1](#)

Psalm 1:1-6 (NKJV)

Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law, he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. The ungodly are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore, the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

As we spend time with the Lord in His Word, HE speaks His truth to our hearts. We are like those trees whose roots go down deep into the water. And will bring forth fruit in its season. (Abiding in Christ). When the storms come and they will ... our “leaves” will not wither, because of that deep relationship with the Lord.

Colossians 1:7 (NKJV)

As you also learned from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf.

Epaphras is believed to have been one of the men who started the Church in Colossae. As the Book of Colossians is known as one of the prison Epistles; Epaphras was in prisoner in Rome with Paul.

Philemon 1:23 (NKJV)

Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you.

Paul described Epaphras as a dear fellow servant and a faithful minister of Christ. This means that Epaphras was faithful in sharing the Gospel. Paul wrote the letter to the Colossians, because there were other groups who were attacking the Gospel and trying to pollute the church in Colossae.

A faithful minister is one who is not ashamed of the Gospel. The following passages are descriptions of the traits of a faithful minister.

Romans 1:16 (NKJV)

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

2 Timothy 1:8 (NKJV)

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God,

1 Corinthians 1:18 (NKJV)

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Acts 20:27 (NKJV)

For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.

Being a faithful minister of the Gospel sometimes will involve people turning their backs on you. This happened to Paul,

Galatians 4:16 NKJV

Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?

Sometimes being a faithful minister means that people will hate us for the message of the cross; no matter how much love is in our hearts as we share it. This may include sharing with a homosexual that God views homosexuality as sin.

What would define unfaithful minister?

Simple put — ***Someone who denies the faith.***

First up is Joel Olsteen. I'm quoting from Christian Headlines March 29,2016 titled :

“Joel Olsteen Defends Not Preaching About Hell.”

Osteen, the senior pastor of Lakewood Church, is known for his positivity and is sometimes referred to as a prosperity gospel preacher, said that he is not cheating people out of truth by not preaching about hell.

"You know, it's not hellfire and brimstone. But I say most people are beaten down enough by life," Osteen said in a special Easter edition of CBS Sunday Morning. "They already feel guilty enough. They're not doing what they should, raising their kids—we can all find reasons. So, I want them to come to Lakewood or our meetings and be lifted up, to say, 'You know what? I may not be perfect, but I'm moving forward. I'm doing better.' And I think that motivates you to do better."

Larry King Interviews Joel Osteen

Let's not forget the Interview Larry King did with Joel Osteen where Larry tells Joel,

"We have had ministers on who say, 'Your records don't count. You either believe in Christ or you don't. If you believe in Christ, you are going to heaven. If you don't believe in Christ, it doesn't matter what you did in life you ain't.'"

To which Joel replied:

"Well if you believe in Christ you will have some good works."

Larry then asked about Jews and Muslims. Joel responded. *"I am very careful, because I don't know who is or who isn't going to heaven. God knows the heart."* So Joel, when challenged by Atheist Larry King with a "softball" question **could not say that Jesus was the only way.**

A Second Example is Rob Bell who was Pastor Of Mars Hill Church in Michigan. I am quoting from a Newsmax Article from May 15, 2015.

Rob Bell Controversial Quotes: 8 Hot Button Statements from Christian Evangelist.

Throughout his time in the spotlight, Bell has made many controversial statements, here are a few hot-button statements:

1. Writing on his Tumblr blog about gay marriage and its place in society Bell says, "It is extremely important that we acknowledge gay marriage as a reflection of the natural, normal, healthy human desire to spend your life with someone."
2. Evangelist Bell questions what happens when people die in his book, "*Love Wins: A Book About Heaven, Hell, and the Fate of Every Person Who Ever Lived*," saying "When we get to what happens when we die, we don't have any video footage, so let's at least be honest that we are speculating, because we are."
3. In an interview with **The New Yorker**, Bell tells Kelefa Sannah that he avoids churches as much as possible. "I don't know where I'm anathema and where I'm considered to be on the good team. The landscape is so confusing, in churchy-world, that I just gave up trying to navigate it."
4. In the same interview with The New Yorker, Bell takes a swipe at conservative churches. "A conservative Bible megachurch, if it's really true to the Jesus that's in its Bible, it has the seeds of its own destruction within itself."
5. In an interview recorded for Odyssey Networks, Bell claims God accepts gay people. "I believe God is pulling us ahead into greater acceptance of our gay brothers and sisters."
6. Continuing in the same interview, Bell talks being gay as being decided by God. "We're realizing God made some of us one way and some of us another and it can be a beautiful thing."
7. Bell tells the Christian churches to accept same-sex partnerships on a May 2013 Premier Christian Radio interview. "I think it is time for the church to accept that we have brothers and sisters who are gay and want to share their lives with someone."
8. In that same Premier Christian Radio interview, Bell questions the Bible's view on homosexuality. "There are scriptures that speak to this, but I don't think you can make an overwhelming case against it."

I guess they never read the following verse:

1 Corinthians 6:9–11 (NKJV)

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, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

A more recent example is the lead singer of Hillsong, Marty Sampson. CBN News August 13th, 2019. The title of the article "[I'm Losing My Faith: Hillsong Worship Leader Rejects Christian Beliefs.](#)"

Marty Sampson, a worship music writer, singer, and active member of Hillsong has publicly denounced his faith on social media.

Sampson, who has notably written songs for Hillsong Worship, Hillsong United, Delirious and Young & Free, shared a now-deleted post to Instagram, explaining how he is "losing" his faith.

The following is a transcript of the post from [Relevant Magazine](#):

"Time for some real talk. I'm genuinely losing my faith, and it doesn't bother me. Like, what bothers me now is nothing. I am so happy now, so at peace with the world. It's crazy.

This is a soapbox moment so here I go ... How many preachers fall? Many. No one talks about it. How many miracles happen. Not many. No one talks about it. Why is the Bible full of contradictions? No one talks about it. How can God be love yet send four billion people to a place, all 'coz they don't believe? No one talks about it. Christians can be the most judgmental people on the planet—they can also be some of the most beautiful and loving people. But it's not for me.

I am not in anymore. I want genuine truth. Not the "I just believe it" kind of truth. Science keeps piercing the truth of every religion. Lots of things help people change their lives, not just one version of God. Got so much more to say, but for me, I'm keeping it real. Unfollow if you want, I've never been about living my life for others.

All I know is what's true to me right now, and Christianity just seems to me like another religion at this point. I could go on, but I won't. Love and forgive absolutely. Be kind absolutely. Be generous and do good to others absolutely. Some things are good no matter what you believe. Let the rain fall, the sun will come up tomorrow."

**[Jesus said, "I am The Way, The Truth, and The Life.
No one comes to the Father except through Me."](#)**

The scary thing that Marty Sampson said. "I am at peace with the World."

James 4:4 (NKJV)

Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Please turn to Acts 20:28-31

Acts 20:28-31 (NKJV)

Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up,

speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.”

While Paul admonished Epaphras for being a faithful minister, he also implored the leaders of the churches to be shepherds to the church of God. The role of a Shepherd is to watch over the flock and protect and warn of danger. Paul warns of men who would come in; speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves. This is the reason why Paul wrote the Book of Colossians. He is going to be addressing some heresies that were creeping into the Church at Colossae. The heresies that Paul was battling against in his day; are still around in the present day. As it is written in the Book of Ecclesiastes, *“There is nothing new under the sun.”*

We are not detouring into these heresies tonight, because the next section in Colossians will address these in great detail, which we will discuss next time.

Please turn back to Colossian 1:8. We will read through verse 12

Colossians 1:8-12 (NKJV)

Who also declared to us your love in the Spirit. 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; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

THE FIRST ASPECT OF PAUL’S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE OF COLOSSAE WAS SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE

In Verse 9, Paul said he did not cease to pray for the church at Colossae. He prayed that they would be filled with the knowledge of God’s will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.

How do you obtain knowledge? We get knowledge about God by reading His word. Please later go back and reread [Psalm 1](#). Also this week Read [Psalm 119](#). Throughout the whole Psalm are references to the Word of God. Here are a few examples.

Psalm 119:9 (NKJV)

How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.

Psalm 119:11 (NKJV)

Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.

Psalm 119:18 (NKJV)

Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law.

Psalm 119:92 (NKJV)

Unless Your law had been my delight, I would then have perished in my affliction.

Psalm 119:103 (NKJV)

How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

Psalm 119:105 (NKJV)

Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path.

What do we do if we do not understand? We can ask for wisdom.

James 1:5 (NKJV)

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

What about knowing God's will for our lives? This is a question most people ask, and is a good question.

God's general will for all of humanity, is that we would receive His provision for the payment of our sins through Jesus's death on the cross. HE desires all men (and women) to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

How can we discern the will of God with personal decisions in our lives?

Questions, such as, "Whom should I marry? " if you are single is a good question. Or which job should I take.

God's Word once again is our guide. If you are a single Christian, God means what HE says and says what HE means when HE says "Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers."

If you are married, God will not tell you to divorce your spouse to marry someone else. God means what HE says and says what HE means when He says, "that **He hates** divorce."

To discern God's will for your life, it is important to remember that God will not contradict something that HE has already said in His Word.

In terms of which job you should take—God will lead you and guide you when you are open to hearing from Him. HE wants us to follow Him and not necessarily chase the dollar. Just because a job is offering the most money, it may not be God's perfect will.

There have many examples of men who were attending a solid Bible teaching, Bible believing Church and left to pursue a job to make more money. This job moved them to an area that did not have a solid Bible teaching and believing Church. Some of these men then strayed and had affairs and ended up destroying their families.

The closer we walk with Jesus and have fellowship with Him through the Word, the easier it will be to hear His voice and to discern His will. If we are actively seeking Him, He will stop us or check us if we are about to make a mistake in discerning His will.

As Paul prayed for the church at Colossae, may I encourage and challenge you to pray for the Church here at Elk Grove Village.

Please pray for your Pastors; that we would be "Faithful Witnesses." of the Gospel. Pray for Pastor Phil, and other faithful witnesses, like Pastor John MacArthur, Jack Hibbs, Pray for the faithful Pastors in Canada and around the world who are facing persecution and prison for preaching the Gospel. Please pray that the pulpits in America would again be aflame with the righteous of God. Pray that God saves the unfaithful Pastors or removes them from their pulpits. Pray for the people to have a hunger for the Word of God and not desire to have their ears tickled.

THE SECOND ASPECT OF PAUL'S PRAYER WAS FOR PRACTICAL OBEDIENCE**Colossians 1:10 (NKJV)**

That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

What does it mean to walk worthy of the Lord?

Well first, can two walk together unless they agree? [Amos 3:3](#)

Walking worthy means to walk in a way that is pleasing to the Lord. The following “tips”, come from the Inductive Study Bible in the information section on the Book of Colossians.

To Walk Worthy We Must:

- *Examine your lifestyle. What are you pursuing? Does it have eternal value? Is it drawing you closer to God or keeping you from time alone with God in prayer and in studying the Word? Are you seeking things above or earthly things?*
- Sometimes it is not a matter of a choice between good and bad, but good and best.
- *Examine your beliefs. Are you being deluded with any modern-day philosophies or traditions which contradict the Word or are not in the Word? Any legalistic rules which are not clearly taught in the New Testament? Any mystical teachings or prophecies that cannot be supported in the Word of God or that have a tendency to add something which isn't there or which seem to be only for an elite group of people?*
- *Are you proclaiming the Lord Jesus Christ and holding firmly to all HE is and all that you have in Him as HE is presented in Colossians?*
- *As we study Colossians: do you see any areas in your life in which you (or **ME**) are falling short or simply walking in disobedience to God's Word? What steps are **WE** going to take to correct these?*

Being fruitful we already discussed. We need to abide in Jesus Christ and let Him live His life through us by faith.

Knowledge and obedience go hand and hand.

THE THIRD ASPECT OF PAUL'S PRAYER WAS THAT HE PRAYED FOR MORAL EXCELLENCE

Colossians 1:11-12 (NKJV)

strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

Where does our strength come from?

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 (NKJV)

And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Philippians 4:13 (NKJV)

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Our strength and power come from obedience to God and His Word. Knowledge and obedience partnered with an inner character will give us the power be fruitful for Him.

This power will come to us through patience and longsuffering—coupled with joy.

How does God increase our patience? Through trials.

Another way to think of longsuffering is perseverance. Perseverance means to hang there; keep on keeping; never give up hope. God may be using the trial that you are facing and how you are responding to it to encourage other believers to press on in their trials; or it could used to show an unbelieving world the reality of your faith.

A favorite example of mine for perseverance.

NEVER EVER, NO NOT EVER, GIVE UP.

Joy is different from happiness. Happiness is an outward emotion based on our external circumstances. Joy is internal and not affected by outward circumstances, but is tied to contentment.

Colossians 1:12 (NKJV)

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

Gratitude needs to be a key component of our walk. We need thank God in everything; not necessarily *for* everything. I've shared this before about my asthma that HE is healing me of. There were times when I had an attack that I thought it was going to be an ambulance ride to the hospital. I thanked God for every labored breath and every beat of my heart as a gift from him.

I thank God for the breast cancer that took my Mom's life. (Explain)

Finally, Jesus' death on the Cross and His resurrection from the dead has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower— please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Reach out to us [here](#).

Want to know more? Click [here](#).

REFERENCES/SOURCES:

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²Nässelqvist, D. (2016). Apostle. In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.