

Colossians 1:11-13

Prayer 2 Power

03/08/20

Open your Bibles, please to Colossians 1. I will read verse 3, then I will read Paul's prayer beginning in verse 9

We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, ⁴ since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, ¹

jump down to verse 9

And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹ being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.²

We have been looking at Paul's introduction into this epistle for a few weeks now, and we are continuing this morning examining his prayer for these believers in Colossae.....For purposes of clarity, I put an outline in the bulletin this morning.....when you see this in outline form, it helps to see Paul's thought process.....and it clearly shows why he prayed, what he prayed, and what his desires were in answer to his prayers..... go ahead and take a look at it for a moment...

In Verse 3, Paul began by telling us why he was thankful when he prayed for these believers..... and remember, he had never met them, he had never seen them.....Epaphras, as far as we know started and pastored this church.....

So, he began with why he was thankful **when** he prayed..... and under Roman numeral I.....with the letters A through E, I have listed the reasons for why he was thankful on your outline.....

- A. it was because of their faith in Christ,
- B. their love for other believers,

1 [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Col 1:3–4). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

2 [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Col 1:9–12). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

C. their hope in heaven,

D. because the gospel they had heard from their pastor Epaphras was bearing fruit, it was increasing, and

E. he had heard about how the Spirit of God had worked in them and given them a love for others..... and that is a lot to be thankful for isn't it? He is simply very thankful that they are in Christ and that being in Christ had changed them from the inside out....and the transformation because of Christ is evident to all who know them....

And, once he explains why he is thankful when he prays for them..... then in verse 9, he goes on to tell us what he prays,

And as you look at it carefully, the entire prayer can be divided up quite simply into just two petitions..... and we know there are just two petitions by noticing the word "MAY" in verses 9 and 11..... I highlighted the word MAY under Petition 1 and Petition 2 on your outline..... And after each petition, Paul mentions results he desires to see in the lives of the people when his prayer is answered.....

we went over the first petition last week, and what we discovered is that Paul prayed that these believers would know God, and they would obey God..... and that their obedience would give them a greater desire to know God, which in turn would give them a greater desire to obey God, which would move them to desire a greater knowledge of God....and this would continue throughout the Christian life.....

The passage emphasizes that knowledge, right knowledge, full knowledge is to lead to obedience..... it is our belief that effects our behavior..... our doctrine that effects our life.....and when a person is off on belief.... in time, his behavior will follow..... and if a believer is off on behavior..... in time his belief will follow..... and this is why Paul told Timothy,

Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; (another translation says, watch your life and doctrine closely.....). persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.

And, of course the converse of this is if you do not watch your life and doctrine, you will shipwreck your faith and the faith of those who hear you.... beloved, what you believe about God will effect every thing you do.....

Now, remember, the reason why Paul is spending so much time emphasizing knowing God and knowing His will, was because he will soon be refuting the false teaching that had come in to the church.....I have reminded you almost every week.....that In this church, there was a

blending of human tradition, OT rituals, Greek Philosophy, self denial, and a hyper spiritual asceticism that believers began to embrace.....

and Paul first begins to counter the false teaching by praying for these believers..... then he will deal with the false teaching head on when he teaches and instructs them that Christ is above all rule, power, authority and the church.....and that in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,³ meaning he is God.....and he is all sufficient in all things..... that is where the letter is going, and his prayer is just a precursor.....

Now, I said last week, it wasn't fair of me to only cover the first petition without including the 2nd petition.....and the reason that it wasn't fair is because you need what Paul is praying for in the 2nd petition to help with the first petition... .. the 2nd petition begins in verse 11

"MAY you be strengthened with all power according to His glorious might." And, like the first petition, there are specific results Paul desires to see when this petition is answered.....They, too are in your outline.....under B - Petition #2.....or you can see them in verses 11 and 12.....So you will have endurance (vs. 11) So you will have patience (vs. 11) So you will express thankful joy to the Father (vs. 12)

What we will discover, as we look more carefully at this passage is that we need God's power to live the Christian life..... that is about as simple as it gets.....we need God's power to live the Christian life.....

We know this because the word strengthened means to cause or enable someone to have the ability to do or to experience something.....meaning that the recipient of the power does not have it..... but receives it outside of himself..... that is an important part of remembering this definition..... the recipient of the power does not have any power..... he receives it outside of himself or herself.....

hold your place in Colossians and.....Open your Bibles to Hebrews 11, to see how this word is used in this passage.... ..most of you might be familiar with Hebrews 11..... it gives a history of many saints in the Old Testament who demonstrated faith in God and his promises..... I will read from verse 32...

"And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,³⁴ quenched the power of fire, escaped

³ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. (2001). (Col 1:19). Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

the edge of the sword, **(and here comes our word)**... were **made strong** out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.⁴

And each of these individual would be the first to tell you that the strength they had was an enabling strength..... they were made strong out of their weakness.....they had no power in and of themselves.....meaning all they brought to the table, or all they brought to the task God called them to was weakness..... and God enabled them, God gave them strength, God strengthened them.....

In the phrase “strengthened with all power”, the words strengthened and power, in Greek are derivatives of the word *Dunamis*, where we get our English word, dynamite. It is an explosive power, a power that can move things, create new landscapes, and, yet, a power we do not personally possess.....

And, when Paul prays, "May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might,"⁵ In 12 words, Paul uses the word power 3 times....You could almost translate this verse as, "Powered with all power according to God's full power....."

Let me begin by stating that the dynamite power he is talking about is the power of the Holy Spirit who now resides in them.....this is how we know this is a power that is outside of them.....Romans 15:13 states, “ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. ”⁶ The word power Romans 15 that is attributed to the Holy Spirit is the same word as our power in Colossians 1.....

We know that the power he is asking God to strengthen the Colossians is the power of the Holy Spirit because we have known from the beginning of the letter that Paul is writing to Christian believers..... and He makes mention in verse 8 of the love they have for one another in the Spirit.....

These men and women have heard the gospel, understood the gospel, learned the gospel, believed the gospel.....and the transformation that has taken place, the reason that they now have faith in Christ, they love one another, they have a hope in heaven..... and they are walking in a manner that is worthy of the Lord, and pleasing Him, and bearing fruit is a direct result of the Spirit of God living in and through them.....

In fact, Paul tells us in Romans 8 that if the Holy Spirit does not reside in a person then that person does not belong to God..

4 *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. (2001). (Heb 11:32–34). Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

5 *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. (2001). (Col 1:11). Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

6 [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Ro 15:13). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

The Holy Spirit's work in our lives is so important that I want to digress for a moment and have you turn to Titus chapter 3. I am going to read verses 3 – 7 and I want to explain the work of the Holy Spirit in regards to salvation.....

Because, though Paul, here in the book of Colossians, does not explain what I am about to explaineverything that has happened in the lives of these believers is a direct result of the Holy Spirit's work ... it is a direct result of them being born again or regenerated by the Holy Spirit..... and Titus 3, gives a fairly complete summary of the Spirit's work in Salvation.... And for the next 10 minutes, I really want you to have your thinking caps on..... don't fall asleep on me..... no drifting, no dozing

When a young wife gets pregnant, I don't know if they do this anymore.... But when we were having kids, we went to class to understand the whole birth experience was all about.... Lamaz classes..... Deb learned to breath.... I was the coach....and we learned all about what was going on in her body and with the baby.... And we had to learn and pay attention... we knew nothing about child birth....

We are about to go over what takes place when someone is not just born into the world.... Rather what takes place **internally** when someone is born again.....or born into the family of God.....You may or may not have ever heard this or heard it presented in this way..... but there is a work of God in salvation that when you understand it, will move you to give all praise and all glory to our great God and Father....And the work is laid out with great clarity in Titus 3.....

Titus 3..... and notice in verse 3, Paul begins with their lives before they were believing Christians.....We know it is before because he is speaking in the past tense.....“For we ourselves **were once** foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.” He is simply describing the men and women he is writing to prior to them being believing Christians..... and I am certain that we can say the same things about us before we were saved.... This is our indictment..... our predicament....men and women living lives apart from Jesus Christ....

What Paul says here in regards to our sinful condition, elsewhere he states that we are dead in our trespasses and sin..... we are enemies of God..... we are alienated from God and hostile toward God....Here, in Titus, he is describing the visible outworkings in our lives that confirm what is commonly called the doctrine of total depravity.... He is stating it in a very succinct way.....

the doctrine of depravity does not mean you and I will do every sin we are capable of, but it does mean we are capable of all sin. A Scottish pastor from a previous century used to say that the sins of every sin known to man rest within my soul.....that was true of him and it is true of you and I....

When Adam and Eve sinned in the garden of Eden, they, as the figure heads of the human race represented all of us..... So their sin and disobedience was passed along to us.....we are not sinners because we sin, we sin because we are sinners..... And, because we are sinners, we are under God's just wrath and condemnation.....unable to ever appease God in our own strength and power.....As I said, this is our predicament.....

Notice verse 4, ⁴“But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy,” That is such an important verse isn't it? It tells us what doesn't save us..... what does save us..... and who we are saved by.....

who we are saved by is an easy one..... Verse 5, “He or God saved us.” Salvation, being brought from death to life, from darkness to light is work of God..... and, it is **not** according to any works done by us in righteousness. We don't have any works of righteousness that would be accepted by a holy God. We don't merit salvation, we don't deserve salvation, we cannot ever do enough good works to attain salvation..... So, what does save us? Or what is the reason why anyone is saved? Paul states.... “according to God's own mercy.”

God's mercy is His gracious faithfulness and lovingkindness that brings undeserving sinners into His kingdom.....into His family.... Into His heaven..... And apart from his saving mercy, no one would ever be brought into His kingdom..... because of the sin that indwells us, none of us.... No one has any ability to choose Him, follow Him, or reach out to Him..... and because of his infinite holiness he demands that all sin and sinners must be punished.

You see, the moment sin came in to the world..... all human hearts from then on were so wicked and deceitful, that there is no ability in us to ever choose God.... This is why Paul states in Romans 3 that there is none that doeth good and no one seeks God.....

It is mercy.....And Paul's use of the word mercy here, surely goes back to the phrase in verse 4, ⁴“But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared,⁷” God our savior appeared in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.....to pay a debt we could not pay.....so we can receive His righteousness which we don't deserve, and be saved from the wrath that is against us.....Mercy is God giving us what we do not deserve...

Simply put, we are saved by God, not by ourselves and it is an account of His own mercy

And, then Paul goes on and tells Titus about the inner workings of salvation in the middle of verse 5.....when he shows that God's mercy is demonstrated “by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit”

7 [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Tt 3:4). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

This is so important..... the spiritual work of regeneration.....begins with God removing our hard, rebellious, stony heart that has no interest in him unable to choose Him or seek Him..... and in God's sovereign mercy, changes our hearts.....in this process of washing of regeneration, he gives us a heart of flesh. Ezekiel 11:9 describes it this way:

“And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh,⁸”

This is the work of mercy....a work that is done inside of us..... but not by self effort..... not done by any merit or goodness, this work of mercy that is done in our hearts is solely because of God's Sovereign grace.....It is a work of God that there is nothing you or I can do to make happen.....

In a real sense, you had nothing to do with your first birth.... You had no say in it.....and, you had nothing to do with your new birth or your regeneration....God, in his divine mercy and grace supernaturally brought you out of your dead state to new life in Christ.....

A Scottish pastor, Eric Alexander explains regeneration like this, “it deals with 2 things. One the pollution of our nature, and two, the perversity of our wills. God implants a spirit of obedience to give us a new heart, and he grants us cleansing to take away our defilement. The essence of the new birth is this supernatural work of grace effected by the Holy Spirit – a work akin to new creation of new life. And it has this double character of cleansing and renewal.”

In order to deal with our nature and our will, God implants a spirit of obedience to give us a new heart.....and it is supernatural.....

In a different passage, Jesus told Nicodemus that unless someone is born again, which is the same word here for regenerated.... Unless someone is born again, or who has been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, he will not see the kingdom of God..... This is no light matter..... Not one human being will ever be accepted into the Kingdom of God, if he is not regenerated, born again, transformed by the Holy Spirit.....

You see, by removing our heart of stone.... And by giving us a soft heart of flesh, this accomplished exactly what Paul states here, washing, regeneration and renewal all reflect the brand new life we have in Christ.....

God is not re- fabricating people..... he is not sending us back through the assembly line to clean us up a little bit..... or to make us a little bit better.....No.... He is taking dead people and raising them to new life..... he is making us new creatures in Christ.....the washing of

8 [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Eze 11:19). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

regeneration and renewal is literally bring us back to the state Adam and Eve had in the garden of Eden.....before sin came in to the world....

the actual definition of the word is, “to experience a complete change in one’s way of life to what it should be, with the implication of return to a former state or relation⁹” And, with a new heart, we are now able to obey God, seek God, love God, and have faith in the provision of His dear Son.....

And, when you read verse 6, you see even more clearly that the work of regeneration is a sovereign work of God, as Paul states, “⁶whom he (that is God) poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,” Remember, it is not because of our works or own righteousness..... He pours out the blessing of regeneration and renewal because of His mercy upon us through Jesus Christ living, dying, and rising again on our behalf.....

And, so Paul closes this out in verse 7 with a summary statement of nearly everything he just said.....

⁷ so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.¹⁰

So that, is like a therefore.... It is a concluding summary of what he has said so far.....The word justified means counted righteous..... declared righteous..... it is judicial term..... it means to be declared not guilty..... in our case, we who are guilty are declared not guilty.... We are pardoned....

But more importantly than that is that our pardon is not like a presidential pardon where a person can be pardoned and set free without finishing his sentence..... And no one pays for the sentence..... or finishes the sentence..... no one takes the guilt of the one pardoned.....

We are justified or declared not guilty because Jesus took our place.... .he took the punishment we deserve.... He bore our wrath..... He died in our place, took on our sin, our guilt.....and our justification our our being counted righteous is a result of our faith in the substitutionary sacrifice of the Lord Jesus..... and the reason we have faith and believe and trust in his atoning sacrifice is because of the new heart of flesh we received from God, to give us the grace to believe.....

9 Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). [*Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains*](#) (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 509). New York: United Bible Societies.

10 [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Tt 3:3–7). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

So the only thing you bring to the table for salvation is your sin.....You don't bring your works.... You don't bring your good deeds..... you don't bring prior religious exercises.....Like the hymn Rock of ages states...

Nothing in my hand I bring
Simply to the cross I cling
Naked come to thee for dress
Helpless look to thee for grace
Foul I to the fountain fly
Wash me Savior or I die

When Eric Alexander said this is a supernatural work, he was absolutely right.....being saved, becoming a Christian, believing that Jesus is the only Savior for your sin includes this mysterious work of regeneration and renewal..... Which gives you the ability to hear the word of God and have faith in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus.....

It is what gives you the ability to confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead..... and if you really thought about your salvation, you probably don't know why on Monday you had no interest or desire for God..... and on the following Monday you did.....

And, it is because God, in his infinite mercy, and abundant lovingkindness regenerated your hard, stony heart, and gave you a heart of flesh.....and so, the only thing you can say to Him today is Jesus, Thank You! For pouring out your mercy on me.... A hopelessly lost sinner....

And the holy Spirit who regenerated you will continue to work in and through you, will never leave you or forsake you..... I need to move on..... but, you cannot miss the fact that in these few verses about salvation, God is called our Savior and he saves us in verse 4..... the Spirit regenerates us in verse 5, and Jesus is our savior in verse 6..... our salvation is a miraculous event and All 3 persons in the God head take part.....

And with the 3rd person in the Trinity living in us, we have the power that helps us in our weakness.....

And, as we now go back to Colossians 1....as we go back to the prayer Paul prays for the Colossian believers that they would be strengthened with all power according to God's glorious might..... my first point was that the power he is talking about here is the power of the Holy Spirit that lives in them because of the regenerating work of the Spirit....

It is a power that is in them, that did not exist prior to becoming believing Christians....but listen carefully.... He is not asking God to give them more than they have... this is a direct attack on those false teachers that are trying to say that you need more than Christ...NO

He is praying **not** that they would have something new..... rather, he is praying they would learn to depend on what they already have in Christ.... And what they have in Christ is powerful.....in the phrase strengthened with all power, I mentioned that Paul uses derivatives of the word dunamis for both words..... we get our English word dynamite from it.... In a sense, he is saying, “May they be dynamited with all dynamite.”

When Jesus told the disciples before he ascended into heaven that “all power is given to me in heaven and on earth.....” this power is the same word that Paul is praying that we will be strengthened with..... it is the power that Jesus possesses to rule over heaven and earth....

This is why Paul goes on to describe this power as “according to God’s glorious might.”

this word is never used to describe human power..... the power he is describing that we need to be strengthened by is the power of God..... and we do possess it because the Spirit lives in us....

The power of His glorious might is seen all over Scripture.....The 3 places in particular from Genesis to Revelation are Creation, Redemption, and the resurrection.....You see it in creation, Ps. 19, “The heavens declare the glory of God, the skies above proclaim his handiwork.” God’s glorious might is self evident every time we step outside..... with every snow flake, every leaf, every time the sun rises and sets.....these are reflections of God’s glorious might

You see it in the parting of the Red Sea and redeeming the nation of Israel from Egyptian bondage.....In the song of Moses after the nation had walked through the Red Sea on dry land, the passage states:

The floods covered them;

they went down into the depths like a stone.

⁶ Your right hand, O LORD, glorious in power,

your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy. ¹¹

God’s glory was manifested in delivering his people from bondage..... The redemption in the OT of Israel from slavery points to the redemption in the NT that we have in Christ..... this, too is a manifestation of God’s power.....

And, 3rdly, we see this glorious power in the resurrection of Christ from the dead...

The power of the resurrection can never be overstated.....All 3 person in the Godhead, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit took part in the resurrection.....in Acts 5:30, we are told

11 [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Ex 15:5–6). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

that God raised Jesus from the dead..... In Romans 8:11, the Spirit is who raised Jesus from the dead..... and Jesus told the Pharisees in John 10 that he has the power to lay down his life and the power to take it up again..... The Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit all powerfully working so that Jesus conquered death, conquered the grave and rose to new life...

. Creation, Redemption, and the Resurrection are 3 things that are Hallmarks that display His glorious might.....

There is nothing that compares to any of these 3 demonstrations of power..... God spoke the universe into existence out of nothing..... God had Moses stand in the Red Sea and raise his staff over it and it split the waters..... and the nation walked through on dry land.....and after the entire nation was safe, the waters washed over the Egyptian army and they perished..... And Christ died and rose again to conquer sin and death..

And what I am getting it is that Paul is praying that these Colossians will be strengthened with creation power, with redemption power, and with resurrection power.... He is praying that they will be filled with a power that is according to God's glorious might..... and it is something that came from outside.... Now resides in them.....they are weak..... and they need to learn by God's grace how to grow in and access God's power

And a big part of this is We need a higher view of God.... A bigger view of God..... and more understanding of who He is and what he has done

I love singing the children's song with my grand kids...

"My God is so big, so strong and so mighty there is nothing my God cannot do." FOR YOU I need to hear this! You need to hear this.... We need to sing it to one another...

The higher view we have of God, his person, his work, and his attributes..... the more grace we will have to see the results Paul is looking for in this prayer worked out in our lives.....

Paul's prayer to be strengthened with His power goes backwards in our text to give the necessary supply to accomplish the first request..... and it also goes forward in the text to give us what we need "for all endurance and patience" and with "joy giving thanks..." ...

Paul uses these two words endurance and patience together in a number of passages of Scripture..... and what is so interesting is that they have similar meanings but are used in different situations..... endurance has the idea of patience, but it is a patience with people..... the man or woman with this kind of patience or endurance is not easily provoked by others....

Barclay writes, "it is the quality of mind and heart which enables a man so to bear with people that their unpleasantness and maliciousness and cruelty will never drive him to bitterness, that

their unteachableness will never drive him to despair; and that their folly will never drive him to irritation, and that their unloveliness will never alter their love....”

..... we live shoulder to shoulder with sinners, some are believers, some are not..... but they are still sinners.....

Do you honestly think you have the capacity in and of yourself to love your enemies? In and of yourself to pray for those who persecute you? In and of yourself to be kind to those who mistreat you?

And, let me go on record to say that responding this way to others who sin against us, who mistreat us, who slander us, who gossip about us, who ruin or distort our reputations.....let me go on record and say that there is nothing in me that has the capacity to endure..... and to be patient.....I need Strength..... I need the power of God to help me.....

but, let me make it more practical..... I need His power to love people I am closest to..... I need his power to help me love my wife..... it is not that she is not lovable..... it is because I love myself.....I am self centered and self absorbed.....

When we had all of our kids at home.... Busy, busy, busy..... like many of you.....soccer, basketball, baseball, football, music, choir..... taking care of the house, earning a living..... when I arrived home from work, I did not want to love and serve my wife and family..... I wanted to sit in a chair and have someone serve me..... what about me????

I got to the point that I would pray before I arrived home something like this.... “Father, arriving home is not the end of my day.... It is the beginning.....you have placed me in this family to serve.... I have no strength.... I have no power..... please help me.... Strengthen me with your power.”

The 2nd word, Patience in verse 11, has a similar meaning, but this word has to do with personal trials and circumstances instead of people..... certainly, it is an acknowledgement that we live in a sin cursed world andsome of our trials are self induced.....we made bad decisions and we suffer the consequences.....

some of them are just normal and natural consequences of life..... illness, losing loved ones, job loss, trials within our families....and some of our trials are completely outside of ourselves..... It makes me think of Joseph, sold into slavery by his brothers..... Daniel, taken captive by the Babylonians.....and, Job..... who lost his children, livestock, income, everything, and had no idea why?

we face these kinds of trials that come because we are not in our final kingdom.....we are not in our final home..... we face these trials because everything in life has been ravaged by sin, and

as believers we are not immune from it's consequences.....one phone call can turn our entire world upside down.....

How do we exhibit patience under trial?

The first petition to be filled with a knowledge of God and His will.....and the 2nd petition to be strengthened with power come together perfectly when we simply say, “we need to have a greater understanding who God is and what He has done, and we need to pray for His divine help in all we do....” so, we still need to know the children’s song....

“My God is so big, so strong and so mighty.... There is nothing my God cannot do...’

We ask for the power he demonstrated in Creation, in Redemption, and in the Resurrection to fill us, to help us, to give us His strength because he is living in and through us..... We need God.

So, your first go to when struggling with people is to God in prayer to give you strength..... and when you are dealing with difficulties in life causing you anguish of soul, like Jesus in Gethsemene, you run to God for strength..... He has every thing you need for life and godliness.....

And then Paul concludes with what might be my favorite phrase in the book of Colossians.....

“with joy, giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.” some translations say, Joyously giving thanks.... In the original, the joy goes with the thanksgiving.....

Let’s not forget what we already went over..... We are sinners, alienated from God, and hostile toward him, under the sentence of death, living in darkness.....we have no ability to come to him, no righteousness that would appease Him.....and no hope in and of ourselves to ever be in his kingdom.....

As sinners, we are not qualified to come into His presence.....and because we are not born into His family, at birth, we do not have any claim on any inheritance he might have..... And we are not saints either....

Do you know what it is like to not be qualified.....or to be disqualified..... my son Jeremy, when he was first trying out for track, he used two feet to do the high jump and you were only allowed to use one..... and he jumped as high as all of the other kids..... yet the judge disqualified him..... he was embarrassed..... **broken and upset.**

You apply for a job and you don’t have the right degree, or the right experience, or know the right people..... you are not qualified.....it is like a big red stamp on your forehead.....it is the

same as when kids choose sides for baseball or kick ball..... maybe you remembering being the last one standing, or maybe you and the last kid weren't even chosen.... You do not qualify.....

And, of course you have no claim on any inheritance because not being qualified means you are on the outside of the family of God.....

Your depravity, your sin, your nature that you inherited from Adam means you are not qualified to be in God's presence, or live in his kingdom.....and yet.....because of the creative, redemptive, resurrection power of God..... because of the mysterious washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit.....you who are not qualified are qualified.....you who had no inheritance, now have an inheritance..... undeserving, unmerited, and unqualified, he qualified you..... and now you share in the saints in light.....

So, you can do nothing but offer joyful thanksgiving to our wonderful heavenly father who has taken you as disqualified as you are..... And made you part of his family, part of his kingdom, brought you out of darkness into His light..... and his share in the kingdom is both a promise of an abundant life on earth, as he supplies the power to live, and eternal life in heaven, where you will be with him forever.....

And it is this hope of your eternal inheritance that does give you the strength to endure people who sin against you..... and circumstances that derail you.....it reminds us that there is something better coming.....

Please, in your prayer life, pray for me and each other.... That we might know God, that we might obey God, that we might experience the power of God and that we might live with humble gratitude to God.

And be mindful as we close of how deep the Father's love for us really is!