

Praying for Others (Part 2)
Colossians 1:12-14
January 1, 2012

Introduction

Colossians 1:12-14 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. ¹³For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Last time we were in Colossians, we see Paul's practice of praying for others in action, and this is something we ought to do when we pray for others. Paul specifically asks God that He will increase their knowledge of His will so that it will have an impact on their own walk. Paul prays that they will walk and work in a worthy manner that is pleasing the Lord, and that they also grow spiritually. He prays that they will receive His might of glory so that they can endure with joy the trials that would come upon them. He prays for them even when things are going good because he knows that is when a Christian is most vulnerable because that is when Satan's attack is the heaviest.

In **verses 3-8**, he begins with thanksgiving to God for His work in their lives. Then he prays for them. He ends the prayer with a prayer for them to praise God with thanksgiving for what He has done for us! This is an important portion of our prayer life...praise. Paul prays for us that we will be able to praise God. So when we pray for others, we are to pray that our brothers and sisters will praise God and give thanks to Him for His good works.

It is God's will that we thank Him in everything:

1 Thessalonians 5:18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

The Bible has a lot to say about thanking God:

Psalms 30:4 Sing praise to the Lord, you saints of His, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name.

Psalms 50:14 Offer to God thanksgiving, and pay your vows to the Most High.

Psalms 75:1 We give thanks to You, O God, we give thanks! For Your wondrous works declare that Your name is near.

Psalms 92:1 It is good to give thanks to the Lord, and to sing praises to Your name, O Most High.

John 11:41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me."

Ephesians 5:20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy 1:12-13 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, ¹³although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

Hebrews 13:15 Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.

In writing out his praise to God the Father for His redeeming work, Paul recounts what Jesus said to him on the road to Damascus. Note the similarities between this letter and His words.

Acts 26:15-18 So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ¹⁶But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. ¹⁷I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, ¹⁸to 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.'

Jesus told Paul that He would give His people an inheritance; He would deliver them from darkness; and He would forgive them of their sins. His words resonated with Paul for the rest of his life because he writes to the church the same things that Jesus told him. Paul gave thanks to God for saving him, and he wants the church to always have that attitude. When we pray for others, let us pray that they will have thanksgiving for God's mercy and grace.

I. His Giving Us an Inheritance (12)

- Father
 - Before salvation, God is our Judge
 - After salvation, God has become our Father through adoption

Note: Paul wants us to focus on our heavenly Father because it is to Him we owe our thanksgiving.

- Qualified
 - Before salvation, we were unqualified for an inheritance

Ephesians 2:12 *remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.*

- Qualified for an inheritance

Matthew 19:29 *And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for My sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.*

Hebrews 6:12 *...but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*

- Receive kingdom now, but full possession in future

1 Peter 1:3-4 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,⁴ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.*

Note: Inheritance in present tense, but not fully realized until we arrive in heaven.

- Of the saints in the kingdom of light

Transition: Paul wants us to realize our position in Christ—that we are now in the kingdom of light. We were once in the kingdom of darkness.

II. His Delivering Us from Sin (13a)

- From darkness

Ephesians 6:12 *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*

Acts 26:18 *to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.*

- From God's wrath

1 Thessalonians 1:10 *and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.*

John 3:36 *Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.*

III. His Bringing Us Into His Kingdom (13b-14)

- Bringing us into His kingdom

1 Peter 2:9 *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.*

- Kingdom
 - Spiritual reality of now

Romans 14:17 *For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*

- Guaranteed by the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 1:13-14 *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, ¹⁴who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.*

- Redemption is the price of bringing us into His kingdom
 - Redemption = deliverance by payment of a ransom (usually—freeing slaves from slavery)
 - Jesus paid sin's ransom (death) upon the cross for us

Romans 3:24 *being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*

- Not by our own works (merits), but only by His completed work on the cross
- Forgiveness of sin

Psalms 103:12 *As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.*

Micah 7:19 *He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.*

Conclusion

Let this praise from Paul be on our lips / hands every time we pray:

2 Corinthians 9:15 *Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!*