

Dwelling in the Word – Colossians 1: 3-6a, 9-14

Paul Thanks God for the Colossians and speaks of his prayers for them – NRSV

I. Background for the Letter:

- a. Colossae – small, relatively unimportant city in Turkey but in a group with Laodicea and Hierapolis. Church there presumably founded by Epaphras, Paul’s representative.
 - i. A healthy church with “love in the Spirit.”
 - ii. But Paul seems to be addressing a challenge of false teachings in the vicinity
 - iii. Paul lays out his Christological position in the second half of chapter 1.
- b. St. Paul writing from prison (4:18) to and praying for Christians he has never met.
- c. The prayer of Paul in Colossians shows:
 - i. What he desires of God for the Colossian Church.
 - ii. A valuable pattern for our prayers for our churches.

II. Prayer for Illumination

Colossians 1:3-6a. 9-14

³ In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴ for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, ⁵ because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel ⁶ that has come to you....

⁹ For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God’s^[d] will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. ¹¹ May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled^[e] you^[f] to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. ¹³ He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.^[g]

- d. Colossians 1:9 Gk *his*
- e. Colossians 1:12 Other ancient authorities read *called*
- f. Colossians 1:12 Other ancient authorities read *us*
- g. Colossians 1:14 Other ancient authorities add *through his blood*

Questions to help the Holy Spirit engage is in the text:

1. What verse, phrase, or thought is coming off the page for you?
2. Why does this verse or phrase seem to be connecting with you?

3. What are some of the things Paul and his companions are praying for the Colossian Church? List three or four of them...
 - a. –
 - b. –
 - c. –
 - d. –

4. Why do you think Paul is praying these things for this small church? This question may tap into your/our theology of prayer.

5. Might be interesting to ask, “What is Paul *not* praying for?”

6. Think about the church you are a part of...
 - a. What sorts of things do we normally pray for in our churches?

 - b. What do you think God might want to do in your church?

 - c. What do you think God may be prompting you to pray for?

7. Any ideas emerging about prayer for the churches in Yellowstone Presbytery and for the presbytery itself?