

Colossians 1:9-14

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Date: 03 May 2015

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[0 : 00] Please take your copy of God's Word, turn to Paul's letter to the Colossians, chapter 1. I've looked around the room a bit this morning and just been with the children down front.

! I think we have some guests with kids that have been here with us before, so this is not a massive surprise. But just for the sake of everybody, I wanted to remind us in brief why we like to have the children in the service with us. And I'm going to do so by reading from that opening paragraph on the bulletin, which is there every single Sunday. And maybe you're tired of it, but I would encourage you to not be and maybe even read it every single Sunday. About halfway down, it says we place high value on the health of families and our corporate meetings are multi-generational in that children remain together with families in the meetings to allow and encourage families to function and grow together.

There's a great deal of value in children getting to see what's important to their parents, to sit and learn to be church people. We believe that each Christian, young and old, has a distinct role in promoting the spiritual maturity of others. And on that note, just to say to you parents, I know it adds some stress. I've been there sitting with the young ones, thumping them on the head, not hearing a lot of what's going on.

But let me just encourage you to not be stressed. It's good for people. It's good for us to love kids and to not be so easily distracted, to sit and focus our attention on what really matters.

Beloved, if you're engaging your mind in what we're doing together, little outcries from the kids should not be a problem. I preach. I preach through a lot of that kind of stuff. And to be frank, I don't even hear it sometimes. Sometimes Sam will say, boy, the kids were rough today. And I go, really? I didn't even hear that. Let it be part of our normal gathering together, that we're a faith family and that our family includes little ones, right? This is precious to me right now, okay?

[2 : 12] If it gets hard for you, we do have some practical helps, a space across the hall where we're piping video and sound over there. We have a nursing room. It's that door. You'll see it in the hallway with the opaque window in it. And there's a key in that little drawer as you go out the door that gets you in there if you'd like some privacy to nurse. But just please don't be stressed about it because we certainly are not. Our text for this morning is Colossians 1 verses 9 through 14. Please follow along as I read.

thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. This is God's word to us. It was written for his glory and our good. We would all do well to listen to it in order to believe its promises and obey its commands. Now this morning I'd like to invite you to make four observations with me from this morning's text. And this is a quite a big bite to chew off here. I really probably this text I could see the the clear potential for four sermons coming out of it. I will tell you that my notes are quite a bit longer than they typically are so I'm going to try to move quite a bit faster than I do. Let me encourage you to be an active listener this morning. I think it's very very difficult to listen if you're not taking notes. A pen in hand certainly helps. So let me encourage you to try to stay engaged with me. If you're like me you like to read the old dead guys. They typically have so much more to say in their books particularly the Puritan writers and they like to make lists within lists within lists and it's incredibly easy to get lost on where you even are. You're on like

Roman numeral number seven underneath subheading number two for the main point they're trying to make and you have to back back up and do that and I'm going to do that to you a bit this morning. So four observations from this text is the main thing but I also have three lists within the major list so notes may help you this morning. Be warned. Four observations. Observation number one.

Paul and Timothy's example of intercession. Paul and Timothy's example of intercession. Notice this. Look at it. Observe it with me together. And so from the day we heard. Heard what? It is made known to us your love in the Spirit. Verse 8. Epaphras has come to them and said these people love one another in the Spirit. So from this day we have not ceased to pray for you. This is intercessory prayer. We're noting Paul and Timothy's example of intercession. Intercessory prayer simply put is the act of praying on behalf of others. It's the act of praying on behalf of others and it is a bold act of love. To go before the Father on behalf of someone else is a great great expression of love for them. James 5 16. James exhorts us to confess our sins to one another and pray for one another intercede for one another that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. Now we are found, if we are in Christ, we are found as righteous in Him. We have the ability, we have the capacity to approach the throne because our sins have been forgiven in Christ and we have been given, we have been, it has been imputed to us His righteousness. As we're saying, in the beloved, right? When God looks at us, He sees Jesus Christ and the prayers of the intercessor are based in the redemption of Christ as He is our intercessor and the great example on our behalf of intercession. Romans 8 33 and 34, Paul writes, who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies, who is to condemn. Christ Jesus is the one who died more than that, who was raised, who's at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. He sits at the right hand of the Father and He says, when I come to God, this is Nathan. I died for him. I paid the penalty for his sin. He has been given my righteousness.

[7 : 23] Listen to His request. There's much intercessory prayer in the Bible. A few examples. Job prayed for his friends. Job 42 10. Moses prayed for Aaron. Deuteronomy 9 20. David prayed for Israel. 2 Samuel 24 17. So did Isaiah and Daniel and Ezekiel. Get those references from me later if you'd like. Nehemiah did the same.

Chapter 1 verse 4 through 11 of Nehemiah. Jesus prayed for the apostles and the rest of those who would and will follow him as his disciples. John 17 9-24. Epaphras prayed for the Colossians. You see this in Colossians 4.12. Just a page over from where we are. And here we see that Paul and Timothy also prayed for the Colossian church, even though they did not know them personally. In verse 8, they had heard from Epaphras of their love for one another in the Spirit. They knew that we would know Jesus' disciples by their love for one another. So they had been given evidence that the Colossians were their brothers. They had been adopted into the same family and therefore they loved them, even though they did not know them. They did not establish the church there. It's likely that Epaphras, the beginner of the church, had heard the gospel in Ephesus where Paul was preaching. And the text states that they prayed for them continually. We have not ceased to pray for you.

[9 : 05] God has accomplished mighty things for his people using the prayers of his people on their behalf. Charles Spurgeon, on the presence of examples of intercessory prayer in the Scripture, said this, Intercessory prayer is exceedingly prevalent. What wonders it has wrought. The Word of God teems with its marvelous deeds. Believer, thou hast a mighty engine in thy hand. Use it well. Use it constantly. Use it with faith. And thou shalt surely be a benefactor to thy brethren.

Intercessory prayer, because it is the way in which God chooses so often to act in the lives of others, has great power. And so you have a ministry in our church. As a congregant of Christ Family Church, whether you're a member or just a regular attender, as a person sitting here today, you have a ministry.

Pray for one another. Second observation. So that was the first one. Paul and Timothy's example of intercession. We ought to intercede for one another. Secondly, let's look at Paul and Timothy's actual intercession. The last half of nine. Asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding. So they make a request that they be filled with knowledge.

Filled with it in a controlling way is what Paul is driving at here. That they so know something that they be moved by it and controlled by it. The Greek word here is epi-gnosis. Gnosis meaning knowledge and an added preposition to the front of that, epi-gnosis, heightens the veracity of the noun. It means a deep and thorough knowledge. Epi-gnosis. A deep and thorough knowledge. A knowledge that fills to the point of controlling and changing who they are. There's a great error in the church today. It certainly exists in ours, and that is the error of mysticism. I hear way too much talk about feelings giving us direction. I feel like this is the way I ought to go. I feel called to a

particular vocation or particular activity or particular city. This is not the language of the Bible. Our heads are never meant to be divorced.

From our hearts. They don't function separate from one another. In fact, they're like, I'm connected by a conduit. Right? I get to you in preaching through your head.

[12:03] Rightly, I get to you through your head. Right? I speak the truth to you, and you take it in, and you consider it, you think about it, and you give it application to your being. Is this who I am? Do I hold up to this truth? Do I rejoice in the truth of the gospel? This is the way in which we work. Some preaching these days simply appeals to the heart. Moves you in some way. There are many speakers who we would classify. I would bow to their speaking prowess. They move people, but they say very little. You feel something, but what do you do with that something? You have some bit of revelatory joy, and then it fades away because it has no basis in knowledge. Our heads are never meant to be divorced from our hearts. Proverbs 19.2 warns that it is not good to be without knowledge.

Isaiah 5.13 states that it was for lack of knowledge that the Israelites were led into exile. They did not know God and how to worship Him. Therefore, they were punished severely, led into exile. Knowledge is a major theme in the scriptures, and certainly, and especially, I would say, in Paul's writing. Let me show you a few examples. 1 Corinthians 1.5. He writes that in every way you were enriched in Him and all speech and all knowledge. He prayed in Ephesians 1.17, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.

In Philippians 1.9, he states, and it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more with knowledge and all discernment. Most of his letters lay a doctrinal foundation before giving any practical exhortation. Right? He roots the very activity of our lives in who God is and what He has done on our behalf. Romans, there's 11 chapters of doctrine before the five chapters of exhortation. Now, in light of all these things, so therefore, because of everything I've told you to be true about the gospel of Jesus Christ, live this way. Galatians, the first four chapters are doctrine. The last two, exhortation. Ephesians, it's split evenly, three and three. Philippians and Colossians follow this pattern. Doctrine first, then exhortation. Knowledge and then applied knowledge. So he prays that they would have knowledge, but knowledge of what? Not just general knowledge, not knowledge of psychology or biology, but knowledge of God's will.

Knowledge of God's will. And here they are not referring to God's will for your life in a specific way, in a concealed way. Who you should marry, where you should go to school, what type of job you should take. John MacArthur calls this dot theology, that we have this idea that there's some perfect will in which we're meant to channel it. We got to get in there just perfect and thread it just right for God to be pleased with us, right? People get so consumed with that. College students, you especially, in the stage in your life where many things are being laid out before you, and there are a lot of opportunities and options. The largest part of my counseling as a pastor is counseling people on what decisions they should make. And so often there is no clear answer. I go, that's a good decision, and so is that one.

This is not the God's will he was referring to here. He's referring to the God's will as revealed in the Scripture. The revealed will of God. Those things that we are meant to be practicing.

[16:08] John MacArthur organizes these well, and I appreciate he's got a wonderful sermon on this you can go search for, where he summarizes that if you will practice the revealed will of God, after that, do whatever you want. If you can say to yourself honestly, I'm practicing the revealed will of God as shown in the Scriptures, then it'll be obvious to you where you should live and who you should marry and what job you should take. John MacArthur organized it this way, six things God wills for your life.

Here's your second list. I'm going to run through it fast with no Scripture proofs at all, because it's not the thrust of today. One, that you be saved. That you come to saving faith in Christ. That your eternity be secure in Him. Second, that you be Spirit-filled. That you walk by the Spirit.

Third, that you be sanctified. That you are set apart for God's purposes, and you are about this activity, this synergistic activity of becoming perfect day by day, pursuing holiness, putting off sin, putting on righteousness. Fourthly, that you be submissive to authority. Varying authorities.

Governmental authority. Authority in the church. Wives with husbands. That you be submissive to authority. Fifthly, that you suffer. The will of God. That you suffer. That you suffer for His name's sake.

And sixthly, that you be satisfied. Now, MacArthur actually says thankful, which expresses it better, but it just drives me crazy that He used all S's except for that one. So, that you be satisfied, by which I mean thankful. That whatever circumstance you walk through, you recognize the sovereignty of God in all things, and that you give Him, ascribe to Him proper thanks for whatever it is that you're going through. And that if you're practicing these six things, and these are general and summary for the Christian life, then you just do whatever you want.

[18 : 16] C.S. Lewis in Mere Christianity said, God is no fonder of intellectual slackers than of any other slackers. If you are thinking of becoming a Christian, I warn you, you are embarking on something which is going to take the whole of you, brains and all. You heard a believer say that they don't enjoy theology, or that they don't want to be theological. If you're going to speak of Christ, you're being theological.

And you better be sure that you're getting it right. So, Paul and Timothy's prayer is not just that they be filled with the knowledge of His will, but Paul adds, in all spiritual wisdom and understanding. Here's a sermon in and of itself. Wisdom and understanding taken together, this is my definition, is the ability to discern the truth and give proper application to said truth. The ability to discern the truth and give proper application to the truth. But their prayer is that they would do this in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, which states the source of the wisdom and understanding. Not human wisdom and understanding, but spiritual. The Spirit of God bringing to us revelation as we read God's Word.

Douglas J. Moo, which you'll I'm sure hear me quote a number of times as we study through Colossians, because I have a wonderful commentary by him on the book, said, The Spirit is the source of the wisdom and understanding that the Colossians were acquired as they negotiated their way through the maze of first century worldview options. They needed the Spirit of God to help them understand the way in which they were to go, what they were to believe. And this is equally true of us. Heresy abounds in our day. There is much to be warned.

But let me just do so in a general way, in the way in which we're meant to be working together by having you turn to Ephesians chapter 4. Mark Colossians in some way, your finger or your handy ribbon.

[20 : 42] In Ephesians 4 verse 11, Paul talks about the varying roles in the church that have been given to the church. In verse 12, for the work of equipping the saints for the work of ministry for the building up of the body of Christ.

So the leadership in a church, those particular positions in a church are meant to equip the saints for the work of ministry, which is the building up of the body of Christ. This is the work of ministry that has been given to all of us. We all have this activity that we are to be about.

And then starting in verse 13, if you'll follow along with me. Until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God. There's that knowledge again.

To mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. So that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

There's much blowing around out there. And we must be founded in the truth of the gospel so that we won't be tossed to and fro. Now the connection for you is that back in verse 4, Paul writes there is one body and one spirit.

[21 : 59] And how did Christ give the gifts at work in verse 11? He gave them by the Spirit. He is the very source for this giftedness.

And he is the strength and the ability to carry out this work. And so as Paul is praying, Paul joined with Timothy. It's what we assume with the plural pronouns there.

That as he's praying this, he's not disconnecting it from activity in the church. Right? He's praying that we will attain this type of knowledge that we'll be working together with spiritual wisdom and understanding.

That there will be an activity about that. Again, you have a ministry in our church. Helping someone else along.

I know that you don't feel like you've arrived yet. Neither do I. I tremble sometimes at the things I have to teach. I tremble when somebody comes to me with a question that is so far outside my scope.

[23 : 04] But we have the Scripture. We've been given the Word of God. And we've been given the Spirit of God to give application for it. Dive into that. You have a ministry in our church.

He or she may be sitting to your right or your left. Across the room. Begin to identify people. I can tell you now that if you come to me and ask for something to do, what can I do to help out around here?

Be ready because I'm probably going to go see him. No one's talking to him right now. This is your ministry today. Go get busy doing that. And see if there's anything you can do to invest in that person's life.

I will make you busy. Imagine a community of faith that is constantly in a big complex web just preaching the gospel to each other all the time.

In all the varying ways. And we do this in a high degree as a church already. It needs to happen more. You have a ministry in our church. We observe Paul and Timothy's example of intercession. [24 : 06] Paul and Timothy's intercession itself. What was it that they were praying for? However, thirdly, let's observe the aim of Paul and Timothy's intercession.

So they make this intercession on behalf of the Colossian church. And this information is now passed on to us that we may be filled with the knowledge of God's will and all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

But there's an aim for that. Not just that we know things. That we have this big fat head full of information. But that we're able to work that out.

And Paul is not shy in giving to us the way in which that should be working out. So the intercession is aimed at five things. Five things.

Number one. Here's your second list within your list. A worthy walk. Number one. A worthy walk.

[25 : 05] Now he is not communicating that our walk is what makes us worthy. This is not what he's saying. What he's saying is that because we are found worthy, we will walk in a particular way.

A walk refers to the daily pattern of life and includes those activities seen and unseen. It includes the way you think, the way you feel, the way you act and speak.

As I said, we are found worthy. We are only found worthy in this absolute sense in Christ. And because we're worthy, we should walk in a way that is pleasing to God.

We have been redeemed. This is the monergistic work of God. God Himself worked that change in us. We have been changed. We have been made His.

Now we are being sanctified synergistically. We have an activity and a part to play in that. Galatians 2.20, Paul writes, I have been crucified with Christ.

[26 : 16] It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.

So even as we are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, we do so by the power and strength of God in us. There's a wonderful hymn that doesn't really match our musical style, although maybe Wes could pull it off for us sometime.

Written by Martin Luther called, A Mighty Fortress is Our God. And the second verse reads like this. I really debated singing this, but I'm not going to. It's hard to get the tune out of your head though once it's in there.

Just listen to the words. Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing. We're not the right man on our side, the man of God's own choosing.

Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He. Lord, sabay off His name from age to age the same, and He must win the battle.

[27 : 31] And He will for sure. Lord, sabay off means God of the universe, which is where Paul heads next in the text.

I'm so excited about next Sunday, in the text for us next Sunday. Okay, so this is the first aim. A worthy walk. Secondly, a fruitful life.

The last half of verse 10. Bearing fruit in every good work. In every good work, and all of the activity that is set before a Christian, that we would bear fruit.

That we would reproduce ourselves. My mind is drawn to the parable of the sower in Mark 4, which we just completed preaching through.

Jesus' explanation in Mark 4.20 says, This is the mark of the good soil.

[28 : 31] The one who has received the Word, and accepted the Word, placed faith in the Word, had the Word change them, had the Word set them about an activity, bear fruit in varying degree.

Don't compare yourself to another, but is your life bearing fruit? This is one of the aims of Paul's prayer for the Colossian church and for us. The third aim, growth in knowledge.

This has been already a prayer that there would be a filling of knowledge, a changing of their direction, God's will, but now he's asking for a growth in it, an increase in the knowledge of God. The writer of Hebrews writes in Hebrews 5.12, For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food. The writer of Hebrews is saying, you are babies still in the faith. We are meant to grow in our knowledge of God.

[29 : 44] We can certainly know the Gospel. We must know it. We must have it preached to us in order to place our faith in it. But we also must grow in our Gospel knowledge. Learn it.

Understand it. Turn it over. It's so beautiful. And look at it from all of its varying perspectives that you might have a deeper understanding of who God is, a greater understanding of who you are, which will do nothing but cause you to exalt in the personal work of Jesus Christ.

We must grow in the knowledge of God. I hope that you can join in with the psalmist in Psalm 119.97 and say, Oh, how I love your law.

It is my meditation all the day. We cherish it. That it is precious to us. That we be a people of the Word. So many of us are biblically illiterate.

And we wonder why we have problems in our life. Fourthly, fourth aim, spiritual strength. First part of verse 11.

[30 : 52] May you be strengthened with all power according to His glorious might. Now the word strengthened in Greek is a present participle, which means it's an ongoing activity.

Not like God charges us up with strength, but that He's constantly providing strength. According to His glorious might, the strength of all power according to His glorious might, which means that the power available to us is the limitless power of God Himself.

Paul prayed in Ephesians 3.16 that according to the riches of His glory, He may grant you to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in your inner being.

We have been given this if we are found in Christ. Strengthened with all power according to His glorious might. And the last aim, fifthly, endurance with thankfulness.

Last part of verse 11. For all endurance and patience with joy. Now endurance and patience are closely related. If there is a distinction to be made, endurance deals with circumstance while patience deals with people.

[32 : 04] Both are concerned with trials of various kinds. So endurance and patience. We are to endure not merely as stoics, gritting our teeth, bearing down.

Think that this is a particular challenge and problem for American men. We've kind of ingrained in us a culture of the cowboy, right? Grin and bear.

We're not to do it as stoics, but with joy. For all endurance and patience. With joy. And then we're said, in the beginning of verse 12, giving thanks to the Father.

Joy overflowing into thanks. Look at a wonderful example of this in Acts chapter 5. After the apostles had been on trial, verse 40 and 42.

And when they had called in the apostles, excuse me, this is the council. When they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus and let them go.

[33 : 12] So they are strictly warned with a beating to not speak in the name of Jesus. Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name.

Right? Giving thanks that they were allowed to suffer for the name of Jesus Christ. And the verse 42 says, and every day in the temple, so in a public place, and from house to house, they did not cease teaching or preaching that the Christ is Jesus.

Enduring with patience and joy and thanksgiving. Back to our main list. So we've got observations. Firstly, Paul and Timothy's example of intercession.

Second, Paul and Timothy's intercession. Thirdly, the aim of Paul and Timothy's intercession. And then fourthly, the confidence of Paul and Timothy's intercession.

The confidence of Paul and Timothy's intercession. Last part of 12 through the end of our text. Now, note with me four reasons for their confidence.

[34 : 27] Last list. Four reasons for their confidence. You can see why I could have done four sermons on all of this. Now, by confidence of their intercession, I do not mean what makes them confident to intercede, although that's still true of them here.

Previously stated, it is because Christ is our great intercessor that we have the confidence to intercede. But what I mean when I say four reasons for their confidence, I'm talking about what makes them confident that God will answer in kind to their requests.

That He is favorable to these things. That they can pray these things in His name. And that He will, in fact, deliver on those requests. So, reason for their confidence, number one.

The inheritance given to the saints. Last half of 12. We have been qualified to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

We are unqualified apart from the grace of God. Totally cut off. Nothing we could possibly do.

[35 : 40] This is the great lesson of the moral law. That you cannot keep the moral law. That God's requirement of us as sin-stained being is too high.

It's impossible for us to do apart from the grace of God. There's strong language in the Scripture about this. Paul writes in Ephesians 2, 1-3, and you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience, among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind.

This is who we once were, and this is who you are if you're not found in Christ. We are ensnared. We are trapped by. We are being lorded over by the prince of the power of the air.

Praise God. Because of His deliverance in Christ, this has changed for us. We are now His.

Romans 8.14 says, For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

Now ladies, when you see that language in the Scriptures, please don't think that the Scripture is being translated in an outdated way. That it's important for the translators to go back and use some gender-neutral language in that way.

[37 : 09] If they were to do so, they would neuter the text. It's making a very strong point. The fault is not in the translation. The fault is in your understanding of who these letters were originally written to.

A very patriarchal society, to be sure. In which only sons received any inheritance. The way in which a lady, a sister, was to gain an inheritance was to be married.

This is the way that wealth was passed along. So ladies, you want to be sons of God. What that language communicates. But I do appreciate, in verse 17, Paul goes on to say, and if children, then heirs.

Heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ. We are all full family members. No distinction is made between us if we are found in Christ.

We have been qualified now to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. I think John's writing helps expound on that idea of the inheritance of the saints in light a bit for us.

[38 : 25] 1 John 1, verse 5, this is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you that God is light and in him is no darkness at all.

If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus' Son cleanses us from all sin.

Of course, 1 John being the great test of our faith, but we can certainly say that if we pursue righteousness, if we're hating the world and we're loving the things of God, we're walking in the light.

God is light. In him there is no darkness at all. We have been granted, qualified, to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. Now, I know that many people struggle with this.

The great aim of pastoral counseling is to draw people's minds back to the Gospel. To unravel all of their thought and all of their emotion and get them back to the place to see who they are because of God's work on their behalf.

[39 : 41] I know that many of you struggle with besetting sin. Habitual type of sin. And while we see much evidence of the pursuit of righteousness in your life, there are things that cause you to fall again and again and again.

I know that many of you walk around with a great deal of guilt and feelings of inadequacy. Let me draw your mind back to the Gospel.

This is what Paul is doing. He's rooting the very foundation for his request. All of these good things he desires to see happen in the life of the Colossian believers in the Gospel truth.

A pastor named Sam Storms in a book he wrote called *The Hope of Glory*, which are meditations on Colossians, wrote, whatever feelings of inadequacy or sense of shame or depths of despair may have crippled you till now.

God has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints of light. If you find yourself saying, I'm not up to the task, I'm a miserable failure, I'm a hell-deserving wretch, I don't deserve to stand in God's presence, the only thing I should inherit is death.

[40 : 53] God now says to those who are in Christ qualified, forgiven, adequate in Jesus, righteous in my Son, come and receive and enjoy your inheritance together with all the saints in the life-giving, soul-cleansing light of my kingdom.

Praise God that we have an inheritance. Reason two for Paul and Timothy's confidence delivers verse 13 says He has delivered us from the domain of darkness.

We've been brought to the domain of light, the kingdom of light. He's delivered us from the domain of darkness. We have been rescued from the power of evil.

It has no ultimate sway over our lives. Do you believe that you've been set free from sin? many of you act as if that's not the case.

You've been set free from it. It no longer has dominion over you. John writes in 1 John 4 4, He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

[42 : 11] So the second reason for their confidence is our deliverance. Third reason for our confidence is the Colossians in our transference.

We've been transferred. We've transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son. We're no longer citizens of the world. We're now citizens of the kingdom of God.

We do not differ in degree. We do not differ in degree. We're not a little better than we once were.

We are different than who we once were. We don't differ in degree, but we differ in type.

1 Peter 2.10 Peter cites from Hosea, Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people.

Once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

And on what basis are we citizens of God's kingdom? On the basis of righteousness. This is our key to the city. This is what grants us access to God's kingdom.

[43 : 18] But not ours. Christ. Again, Christ has imputed to us His righteousness. The reason Christ had to come and live a perfect life was so that He fulfilled the law.

So that He came and lived it perfectly. And He therefore had an account to credit to us.

Righteousness to give to us. Christ. There's a double imputation of Christ in redemption.

We're given Christ's righteousness. And fourthly, the fourth reason for their confidence, we're given forgiveness. Our sins have been forgiven.

Verse 14, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Because God is perfectly just, God could not simply dismiss sin.

That would not be justice. He has to punish sin. It is infinitely offensive to Him, so He punished infinitely in Christ our sin. We are imputed the suffering of Christ.

[44 : 19] That has been forgiven us. Our sin has been wiped clean because it has been punished in Christ. I'm going to read it to us at the closing of the Lord's Supper for the benefit of our souls.

This is what causes Paul to launch into a cosmic, Christological hymn in verses 15-20. This kingdom in which we have been delivered to, the forgiveness of our sins in Christ, is what causes Him to go on to say these magnificent things about who He is, was, and now is to us in this day.

Praise God forevermore for the person and work of Jesus Christ. Because of who the Colossians were, and because of who we are, if we are in Christ, we only have two choices.

Be obedient or make excuses. You have been delivered. You have been set free. You have been given all the power you need to live for God.

So be obedient or make excuses. It's the only two choices you have. because of who the Colossians were, and because of who we are, if we are in Christ, Paul and Timothy can confidently ask and know that their prayers will be answered, and we can pray in the same way for one another and have the same confidence before God.

[45 : 52] And I hope that you will begin to do so if you're not already. In closing, let me read the text to you one more time. 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 and all spiritual wisdom and understanding, 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.

May you be strengthened with all power according to his glorious might for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Let's pray together.