

# LESSON 3

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## PAUL'S PRAYER FOR THE COLOSSIANS

In verses 9 through 14, he prayed for spiritual insights and productivity through good works. His purpose for such a request was that the Christians in Colossae, by being strengthened, might patiently and joyously serve God, who had qualified them to share in the inheritance with the saints in the Light (vv. 11, 12). They had been delivered from the domain of darkness and brought into the kingdom of Jesus, in whom they were redeemed and forgiven of their sins.

### THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND SPIRITUAL WISDOM (1:9)

Along with his companions, Paul had unceasingly prayed for the Colossians since receiving the report from Epaphras concerning their faith, hope, and love (1:3–8). In this section Paul informed these brethren of the content of the prayers being offered for them, which included asking God for even greater growth for the church there.

1. What personal characteristics do the statements in verses 9 through 14 reveal about those offering prayers for the Colossians?
2. What four requests did Paul and his companions make in their prayers for the Colossians?
3. What is the Greek word used for “knowledge,” and what does it mean as it is used in this verse?
4. How does God develop spiritual wisdom in us?

### THEIR CHRISTIAN WALK AND FRUIT BEARING (1:10)

The four phrases Paul used in order to express his desire for the Colossians are (1) “walk in a manner worthy of the Lord,” (2) “please Him in all respects,” (3) “bearing fruit in every good work,” and (4) “increasing in the knowledge of God.”

Paul was praying that they would have a knowledge that would give them spiritual understanding and wisdom before he prayed for them to have the four traits mentioned above. Spiritual wisdom should produce a life that exhibits these spiritual attributes. In their complex and ungodly world, the Colossians needed insights that could be translated into enjoyable living that would be acceptable to God.

5. What is implied by Paul's use of the word "walk" in verse 10?
6. What does Paul mean by "in all respects" when he speaks of pleasing God?
7. What does Paul say in verses 10 through 12 that the Colossians should be doing to please God?
8. How can we obtain "knowledge of God"?

### **THEIR SPIRITUAL STRENGTH (1:11, 12a)**

Spiritual strength and power for the Colossians would come through insights that led them to walk in a way worthy of God. While they were doing their part, God would be doing His part to strengthen them. God gives help to overcome life's difficulties through His divine power, which far exceeds the problems of the world (1 Jn. 4:4).

9. What does the phrase translated "Strengthened with all power" literally mean, and what is significant about that literal meaning?
10. What is the difference between steadfastness and patience?
11. What "power" did Paul desire for his brothers and sisters in Christ?

### **THEIR ENTRANCE INTO THE KINGDOM OF LIGHT (1:12b, 13)**

First, Paul described the brethren as qualified . . . to share in [a spiritual] inheritance. People are unable, by their own abilities, to qualify themselves for the inheritance promised by God. The work of another—Jesus—is what makes qualification possible. God, the source of this great blessing, had qualified the Colossian brethren through Jesus, enabling them to obtain the inheritance. This inheritance is a home in heaven (1 Pet. 1:3, 4).

12. Who will receive the inheritance of verse 12?

13. How is this inheritance parallel to an earthly inheritance one might receive from a deceased relative?
14. Who are “the saints in Light”?
15. What does Paul mean when he uses the figure of darkness in verse 13?
16. What does the phrase translated “His beloved Son” literally mean, and what is therefore the significance of this phrase?
17. What “Kingdom” does Paul refer to in verse 13, and when will it be established?

### **THEIR FORGIVENESS AND OURS IN CHRIST (1:14)**

Paul continued his figure of deliverance begun in verse 13. The Colossians, along with Paul, had been redeemed and freed from spiritual captivity. The result of redemption is the forgiveness of sins enjoyed by those who are in Christ Jesus, the only source of redemption.

18. How did Christ redeem us in the sense that Paul uses the word “redemption” in verse 14?
19. What six truths are implied by verses 12 through 14?